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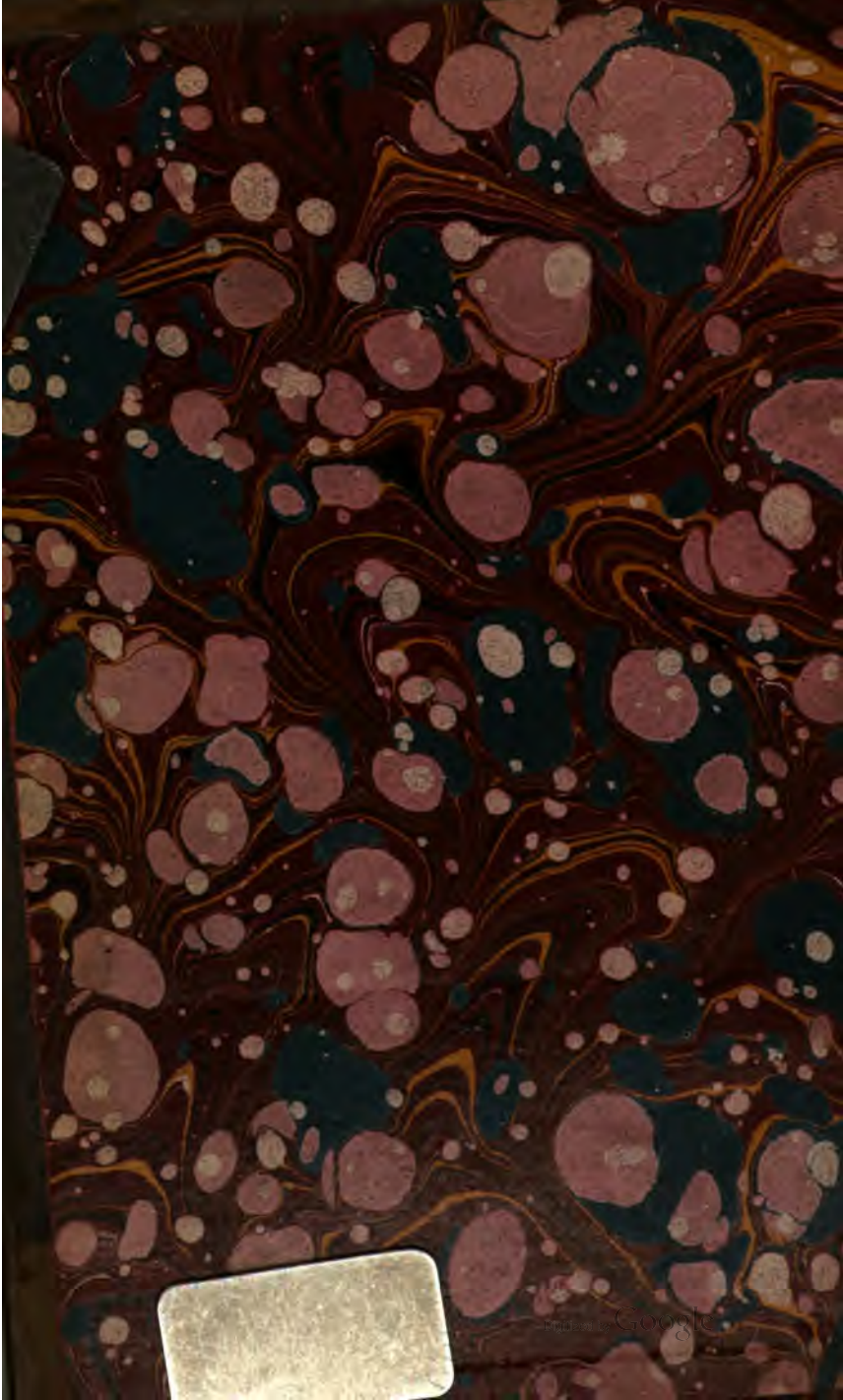
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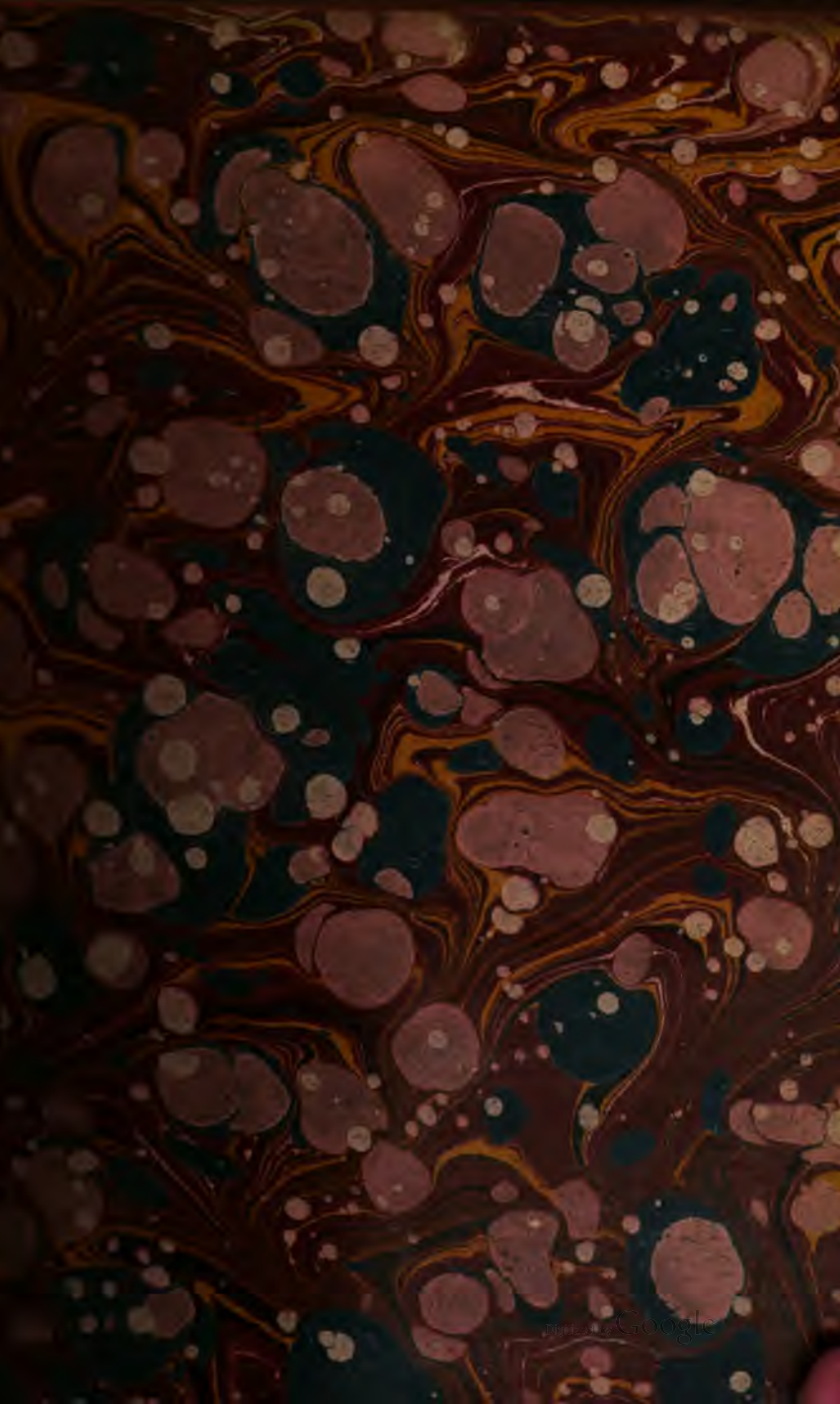
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THE  
THEBAID  
OF  
STATIUS,  
TRANSLATED INTO  
ENGLISH VERSE,  
WITH  
NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS;  
AND  
A DISSERTATION upon the whole by  
Way of PREFACE.

Curritur ad vocem jucundam, et carmen amice  
*Thebaidos*, lætam fecit cum STATIUS Urbem,  
Promisitque diem, tantâ dulcedine captos  
Afficit ille animos, tantâque libidine Vulgi  
Auditur; sed cum fregit subfœllia versu,  
Esurit, intactam Paridi nisi vendat Agaven. *Juvenal, Sat. 7.*

All *Rome* is pleas'd, when STATIUS will rehearse,  
And longing Crowds expect the promis'd Verse:  
His lofty Numbers with so great a Gust  
They hear, and swallow with such eager Lust:  
But while the common Suffrage crown'd his Cause,  
And broke the Benches with their loud Applause;  
His Muse had starv'd, had not a Piece unread,  
And by a Player bought, supply'd her Bread. *Dryden.*

O X F O R D,  
PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON-PRESS.  
M DCC LXVII.

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Y H N E II

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TO THE  
MOST NOBLE PRINCE  
HENRY  
DUKE OF BEAUFORT,

**Y**OUR GRACE'S Condescension in permitting me to put my juvenile Labours under your Protection does me Great Honour, and claims my warmest Gratitude: It was, I confess, my highest Ambition to inscribe this Translation to one, who had on a most publick Occasion distinguished Himself by such classical Elegance and real Dignity, as justly entitled Him to the universal Applause of a most learned as well as splendid Audience. — Nor can the Translation of a Poem, whose Subject is the Actions of Heroes and Princes, be inscribed with Propriety to any one but a Person descended like YOUR GRACE from so antient and so illustrious a Line of Ancestors.

I shall not presume to trouble your GRACE with a longer Address, as I well know, that amidst all Your GRACE's Princely Virtues and Amiable Qualities, this is not the least conspicuous, that Your Heart is formed to despise every, the least, Appearance of Flattery. I have the Honour to be,

*My Lord,*

*Your GRACE's most obliged and*

*most devoted humble Servant,*

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# THE P R E F A C E.

**I**T is a general, and a true Observation, that we seldom sit down with Pleasure to read the *Author*, before we have some Knowledge of the *Man*. This so natural a curiosity every Editor and Translator of a Book should endeavour to gratify, as the Life of the Writer is oftentimes the best Comment on the Work itself. In Compliance therefore with this Remark, we shall collect, and lay before our Readers all that has come to our Knowledge of the Birth, Condition, Character and Fortunes of our Poet.

PUBLIUS PAPINIUS STATIUS (for so Life of was he called, and not *Surculus*, as some Statius. Grammarians affirm, who confound him with the Rhetorician, that flourished about the Time of *Nero*) was born at *Naples* in the Be- Birth.

gining of the Emperor *Claudius's* Reign. Those, who will have *Tholouse* in *France*, to be the Place of his Birth, might have been convinced of their Error, if they had attended to what he himself says in his *Epithalamium* of *Stella* and *Violantilla*.

*At te nascentem gremio mea prima recepit  
Parthenope, dulcisque solo tu gloria nostro  
Reptasti.*

Or in his Poem to *Claudia*.

*Nostra quoque et propriis tenuis, nec rara  
colonis*

*Parthenope, cui mite solum trans æquora vectæ  
Ipse Dionæa monstravit Apollo Cumbæ.*

He was descended of a good Family by his Father's Side, who was born at *Sellæ* in *Epirus*, not far from the celebrated *Dodonean* Grove, and taught Rhetoric to the Nobility there with singular Applause, not only for his Skill in that Profession, but likewise for his Probity and extensive Learning. The Honours, he was distinguished with, bear Testimony to this Part of his Character: for after having been made a Citizen of *Naples*, he was presented with the Laurel, and a Crown of Gold by *Domitian*; a Proof of his Favour with that Prince, as the former

was of his Interest with the People. He married *Agylline*, of whom we have no farther mention, than that she died before him. See *Sylva*, L. 3. It is remarkable (says the Author of *Polymetis*) that Poetry ran more lineally in *Statius's* Family, than perhaps in any other. He received it from his Father, who had been an eminent Poet in his Time, and lived to see his Son obtain the Laurel-Wreath at the *Alban Games*, as he had formerly done himself. --- Thus far Mr. *Spence*: and it is among the *Desiderata* of the learned, that we have nothing extant, but what the Son wrote. The *Epicedion*, we find in his *Miscellanea*, is at once an Argument of his Father's Merit, and his own filial Piety.

OUR Author discovered an early Bent to Poetry, which was so much cherished and improved by his Father's Instructions, that he soon became the public Talk, and was introduced to the first Wits of the Age, and afterwards to the Emperor himself, by his Friend *Paris*, the Player, at that Time one of the chief Court-Favourites. His literary Merit gained him so large a Share of the Emperor's Esteem, that he was permitted to sit at Table with him among his Ministers and Courtiers of the highest Quality, and was often crowned for his Verses, which were publicly recited in the Theatre.

*Ter me nitidis Albana ferentem.  
 Doma comis, sanctoque indutum Cæsaris auro  
 Visceribus complexa tuis, fertisque dedisti  
 Oscula anhela meis.*

Once however he lost the Prize in the Capitol.

--- *Tu cum Capitolia nostræ  
 Inficiata lyræ; sævum, ingratumque dolebas  
 Mecum victa Jovem.*

The frequent Determination of the Judges in his Favour created him the Envy of *Martial*; who piqued himself much on his *Ex-tempore* Productions: insomuch that he has never mentioned *Statius* in his Account of the Poets, his Contemporaries. The *Thebaid*, finished at *Naples*, and dedicated to *Domitian*, was received at *Rome* with the greatest Applause, as *Juvenal* has told us in the Passage, which I have chosen for my *Motto*. This is thought by some to have been nothing more than a Sneer. Mr. *Dryden* however in his Translation of it, and Dr. *Crucius*, in his Life of our Author, think otherwise. I shall give the Reader the Words of the Latter. “ To  
 “ me the Occasion of his mentioning *Statius*  
 “ seems to be this: he observes in his Satire  
 “ the low State, and small Encouragement  
 “ given



# P R E F A C E.

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“given to Men of Letters, who were often  
“reduced to the hard Necessity of Writing  
“for Bread; and that notwithstanding the  
“World allowed their Merit, and admired  
“their Writings. *Statius* is brought in, as  
“an unhappy Example of this ill Usage.

*Curritur ad vocem, &c.*

“From this Passage we learn, that *Statius*  
“wrote a Tragedy, which *Paris* purchased,  
“who from a Player, was become the Em-  
“peror’s Minion, the Poet being reduced to  
“sell it for his Subsistence.. This Circum-  
“stance perhaps might have introduced our  
“Poet to that Favourite, for I do not find,  
“that after his Admission to his Patronage,  
“he wanted the Conveniences of Life. How-  
“ever it does not appear from what has been  
“quoted, that *Juvenal* has spoken reproach-  
“fully of him, but rather has given him  
“great and real Commendations, and has  
“particularly taken Notice of his noble Style;  
“the Translator has altogether favoured this  
“Sense. This Testimony deserves the more  
“to be considered, as coming from one,  
“whom both his Friendship to *Martial*, and  
“Hatred to the Court might reasonably be  
“presumed to have made our Author’s  
“Enemy.”

But

BUT to return to our Poet, he had no sooner finished his *Thebaid*, than he formed his Plan of the *Achilleid*, a Work, in which he intended to take in the whole Life of his Hero, and not one single Action, as *Homer* has done in the *Iliad*. This he left imperfect, dying at *Naples* in the Reign of *Trajan*, before he had well finished two Books of it.

WHEN he was young, he fell in Love with, and married a Widow, Daughter of *Claudius Apollinaris*, a Musician of *Naples*. He describes her in his Poems, as a very beautiful, learned, ingenious and virtuous Woman, and a great Proficient in his own favorite Study of Poesy. Her Society was a Solace to him in his heavy Hours, and her Judgment of no small Use in his Poem, as he himself has confessed to us in his *Sylvæ*.

*Longi tu sola Laboris*

*Conscia, cumque tuis crevit mea Thebais annis.*

A Woman of such Qualifications, as these could not fail of commanding his warmest Love and Respect. He inscribed several of his Verses to her, and as a Mark of his Affection behaved with singular Tenderness to a Daughter, which she had by a former Husband. During his Absence at *Naples* for the Space of twenty Years, she behaved with the strictest Fidelity, and at length followed him,

him, and died there. He had no Children by her; and therefore adopted a Son, whose Death he bewails in a very pathetic Manner.

*Tellure cadentem*

*Excepi, et vinctum genitâli carmine fovi,  
 Poscentemque novas tremulis ululatibus auras  
 Inferui vitæ: quid plus tribuere Parentes?  
 Nonne gemam te, care Puer, quo sospite natos  
 Non cupi?*

This (as Dr. *Crucius* observes) is a good Argument, that *Domitian* and *Paris's* Bounty had set him above Want; one, if not the principal End, of Adoption being to have one to inherit, what we leave behind us, whose grateful Behaviour, and filial Duty might supply the Place of a true Son. Besides the Poet informs us, that he had a small Country-Seat in *Tuscany*, where *Alba* formerly stood.

*Parvi beatus ruris Honoribus,  
 Quæ prisca Teucros Alba colit Lares,  
 Fortem atque facundum Severum  
 Non solitis fidibus saluto.*

WITH Regard to his moral Character, Charac-  
ter. our Author stands unimpeached; and from what we can collect, he appears to have been religious almost to Superstition, an affection-

ate Husband, a loyal Subject, and good Citizen. Some Critics however have not scrupled to accuse him of gross Flattery to *Domitian*. That he paid his Court to him with a view to Interest, cannot be denied: so did *Virgil* to *Augustus*, and *Lucan* to *Nero*: and it is more than probable, his Patron had not yet arrived to that Pitch of Wickedness and Impiety, at the Time he wrote his Poem, as he shew'd afterwards. Envy made no Part of his Composition. That he acknowledged Merit, wherever he found it, his *Genethliacum* of *Lucan*, and *Encomia* on *Virgil*, bear ample Testimony. Nay, he carried his Reverence for the Memory of the latter almost to Adoration, constantly visiting his Tomb, and celebrating his Birth-Day with great Solemnity. --- His Tragedy of *Agave* excepted, we have all his Works, consisting of his *Sylvæ*, or miscellaneous Pieces, in five Books, his *Thebaid* in twelve, and his *Achilleid* in two.

Essay on  
the *Thebaid*.

HAVING laid before the Reader the most authenticated Accounts we have of our Poet's Life, I shall now deliver my Sentiments of the Work in general freely and impartially; not having the Vanity to expect the World will abide by my Opinion, nor invidiously detracting from the Merit of other Authors: to set that of *Statius* in a more advantageous Light, as has been the Practice of some li-

terary Bigots. So conscious am I of the Want of critical Abilities, that I should have declined saying any thing by Way of dissertation, had not my more able Predecessors entailed it upon me, and by their Examples, rendered it the indispensable Duty of each succeeding Translator. Therefore if any Thing is advanced contrary to the Doctrine of the Critics, Youth must plead for me, and procure that Pardon, which would be denied to Persons of a more mature Judgment.

As the World is no longer so bigotted to *Aristotle* and *Bossu*, as to reject a Work, merely because it is not written according to their particular rules, I shall not trouble myself to enquire, whether the *Thebaid* is an Epic Poem, or not. Sufficient is it to observe, that Mr. *Pope* thought it so; and that it has a better Title to the Name, than the *Pharsalia* of *Lucan*, which Mr. *de Voltaire*, in his paradoxical Essay, has termed one. However before we proceed to a critical Disquisition of its Merit, it is necessary to inform the Reader, that the Event therein spoken of, and described, happened about 1251 Years before the Birth of our Saviour, and 42 before the Destruction of *Troy*. The Purport of the History is this,

Sketch of  
the Sub-  
ject.

**LAIUS**, King of *Thebes*, despairing of having any Children by his Wife *Jocasta*, consulted the Oracle, and received for Answer, that he should have a Son, who would one Day murder him. To prevent this, as soon as the Child was born, he bored Holes through his Feet, and fastening them to a Tree with Thongs, left him, from which Misfortune he was afterwards named *Oedipus*. The royal Infant however was preserved by the Care of the Servants; and in Process of Time, travelling near *Phocis*, met his Father *Laius* without knowing him, and upon his disputing the Way, killed him in the Heat of Passion. He afterwards ascended the Throne of *Thebes*, and married *Jocasta* his Mother, at that Time unknown to be so; by her he had four Children, *Eteocles*, *Polynices*, *Antigone*, and *Ismene*. As soon as his Sons were grown up to Man's Estate, they dethroned their Father, and agreed between themselves to reign alternately. *Eteocles* was appointed by Lot to rule the first Year; but when that was expired, refused to resign the Crown to *Polynices*, his younger Brother. Upon this a War commenced, in which the injured Prince was assisted by *Adrastus*, King of *Argos*, and five other Heroes. These were all slain in Battle, except *Adrastus*; and the two Brothers falling in single Fight,

*Creon* usurped the Throne, and by an inhuman Act of Cruelty in not suffering the dead Bodies to be buried, drew upon himself the Vengeance of *Theseus*, who marched an Army against him, and took the City.

THE ingenious Mr. *Harte*, speaking of the Subject of the *Thebaid*, says. "It must certainly be an infinite Pleasure to peruse the most antient Piece of History now extant, excepting that in holy Scripture. This Remark must be understood of the Action of the *Thebaid* only, which *Statius*, without Question, faithfully recited from the most authentic Chronicles in his own Age. The Action of the *Iliad* and *Odyssy* happened several Years after. This is evident from *Homer's* own Words. *Agamemnon* in the fourth Book of the *Iliad* recites with great Transport the Expedition of *Tydeus*, and *Ulysses* mentions the Story of *Jocasta* (or *Epicaste*, as he calls her) in a very particular Manner, in giving an Account of his Descent to Hell, *Odyssy*, Book 11<sup>th</sup>. The Antiquity of the *Thebaid* may be considered also in another View: as the Poet was obliged to conform the Manners of his Heroes to the Time of Action, we in Justice ought not to be so much shocked with those Insults over the dead, which run through all the Battles, This softens a little the Barbarity

“barity of *Tydeus*, who expired gnawing the  
 “Head of his Enemy, and the Impiety of  
 “*Capaneus*, who was thunder-struck, while  
 “he was blaspheming *Jupiter*. Whoever  
 “reads the Books of *Joshua* and *Judges*, will  
 “find about those Times the same savage  
 “Spirit of Insolence and Fiertè.”

Charac-  
 ters of the  
*Thebaid*.

THE latter Part of this Observation may  
 serve, as a Defence of our Author against  
 Mr. *Pope*'s Censure of his Characters (see  
 Preface to his *Homer*) and that of *Bossu*, who  
 in his Treatise on Epic Poetry has the fol-  
 lowing extraordinary Remark. “The great-  
 “est Part of *Statius*'s Characters are false.  
 “The Impetuosity of his Genius, joined to  
 “the Desire of amplifying, and making every  
 “thing he would say, appear grand and mar-  
 “vellous, has been the Occasion of this De-  
 “fect. He almost always carries to Excess  
 “the Passions he represents in his Personages.  
 “He does not know, what it is to preserve  
 “Uniformity: he makes his Heroes act Ex-  
 “travagancies, which one would not pardon  
 “in young Scholars, and often, instead of  
 “describing them as he ought, he has made  
 “*Chimeras* of them all. These Faults can-  
 “not be attributed but to Want of Judg-  
 “ment, Knowledge, and a Justness of Think-  
 “ing.” Unwilling as I am to contradict a  
 Writer of such acknowledged Abilities, as  
 Mr. *Bossu*,



Mr. *Bossu*, I must, in Justice to the Poet, deny Part of the Charge, viz. that the greatest Part of his Characters are false. I know but two, which are exaggerated in the Colouring: namely *Tydeus* and *Capaneus*. *Eteocles* and *Polynices* are out of the Question: being such as he was obliged to describe them, in Order to attain the moral End of his Poem: which was to shew the fatal Consequences of Ambition on the one Hand, and of a too greedy Thirst of Revenge on the other. The rest, *Adrastus*, *Amphiaraus*, *Parthenopæus* and *Hippomedon* are very amiable Characters. In the two former we have a lively Portrait of a good King, and pious Priest; and the two latter display great Magnanimity, and Nobleness of Heart in voluntarily taking Part with the injured at the Expence of their Lives and Fortunes. The female Characters are likewise unexceptionable. *Ismene* and *Antigone* act the Part of tender and loving Sisters: *Argia*, *Deiphyle*, and indeed all the Relicts of the seven Leaders are illustrious Examples of conjugal Affection; and even the unhappy *Jocasta* herself is blameless, if considered in the Light of a Mother.

LET us now take a View of our Author's Scheme and Conduct of the Poet. poetical Conduct and Oeconomy, an Object, which should have been first attended to, had

I not

I not been insensibly drawn away to consider his Characters. Here, divesting myself of all Predilection and Partiality, I must own, he has in many Points failed. One great Cause of his Imperfection in this Particular is his having stuck too close to History and Tradition, and not sufficiently calling in the Assistance of Fiction and Invention, a lawful and necessary Advantage, which all Epic Writers are allowed to take. The Introduction of the funeral Games however, through which he has destroyed the Unity of his Action, and which has been oftener attacked than any one Part besides, is apologized for by Mr. *Harte* in a very masterly Manner. "The Design of this Book (says he) was to  
 "give a Respite to the main Action, introducing a mournful, but pleasing Variation  
 "from Terror to Pity. It is also highly probable, that *Statius* had an Eye to the funeral Obsequies of *Polydore* and *Anchises*  
 "mentioned in the third and fifth Books of  
 "*Virgil*: we may also look on them, as a  
 "Prelude opening the Mind by Degrees to  
 "receive the Miseries and Horrors of a future War. This is intimated in some  
 "Measure by the Derivation of the Word  
 "*Archemorus*. Besides the Reasons above-mentioned would have a fine Opportunity  
 "of remarking upon chief of the Heroes,

“who must make a Figure hereafter; this is  
 “represented to the Eye in a lively Sketch,  
 “that distributes to each Person his proper  
 “Lights with great Advantage.”

THE Merit of Speeches and Orations is Speeches determined in a great Measure by the general Character of the Persons, who utter them; their Propriety consisting in their Agreement with the Manners of the Speaker. *Adrastus* must not talk like *Polynices*, nor *Capaneus* like *Amphiaraus*. *Statius* in this Particular deserves our highest Applause. His Heroes always speak, as they act: his Orations are nervous, animated, eloquent, not so prolix as *Lucan's*, nor so sententious, as those of *Virgil*. Though admirable in all, he principally excels in the mournful and pathetic. He is the same among the *Romans*, as *Euripides* among the *Greeks*. I forbear particularizing any Speeches here, as they have been already observed in the Notes.

THE next Point, that falls under our Con- Senti-  
ments. sideration, is the Sentiments; in which our Author is very unequal: They are never low or vulgar, often just and noble, but sometimes ranting and unnatural. He never falls, but is often lost among the Clouds, by soaring too high, and too studiously avoiding every Thing, that has the Appearance of being flat and frigid. In this Article he resem-

bles our Countryman *Lee*. He is less ~~amoral~~ than *Virgil*, less familiar than *Homer*, and less philosophical than *Lucan*.

Descriptions,  
Comparisons,  
&c.

WE now come to his Descriptions, Images and Comparisons, a Part in which he shines with distinguished Lustre. So strong is his Talent this Way, that whatever he describes, we seem to see in Reality. In his Descriptions he is full, and exact, in his Images bold, and lively. "Your Attention (says Dr. *Cruikshank*) is always kept awake; nay rather the many surprizing Circumstances crowd in so thick upon the Mind, that it finds itself almost at a Loss how to take them all in, as he represents them; so far is the Poet from "letting the Subject grow dull and troublesome in his Hands." With Respect to his Similies, they are for the most Part proper and well-drawn; but sometimes want a Parity in the Circumstances, which renders them obscure: this Defect proceeds rather from the Impetuosity of his Genius, than want of Judgment; for being too hasty to dwell upon Particulars, he gives nothing more than the Outlines of a Comparison, and leaves it to the Reader's Imagination to fill them up.

Style.

FROM the descriptive Part we are naturally led to take a View of our Poet's Style, of which the Author of the Lives of the *Roman* Poets has, I think, given the best Account.

Account. "*Strabo* (says he) in his Prolu-  
 " *one* has placed *Statius* on the highest Top  
 " of *Parnassus*; thereby intimating the Strength  
 " of his Genius; and the lofty Spirit of his  
 " Style; which indeed is generally supported  
 " by a bold and lively Expression, and full  
 " flowing Numbers. His Manner therefore  
 " resembles rather the martial Strut of a Ge-  
 " neral, and the Magnificence of a Triumph,  
 " than the majestic Port and true Grandeur  
 " of a Prince, which better suits the inimi-  
 " table Character of *Virgil's* Style. As a  
 " Soldier cannot easily lay aside the Rough-  
 " nels of his Character, neither can *Statius*  
 " descend from the Pomp of Language and  
 " Loftiness of Numbers, when his Subject  
 " requires it."—To this Remark I must beg  
 Leave to add, that he often uses Hellenisms  
 with singular Beauty and Propriety. There  
 is one Fault however, which the Translator,  
 in Justice to himself, ought not to conceal,  
 and that is his frequent Obscurity.

It remains now to treat of his Verifica-  
 tion; which is scarcely inferior to that of any  
 Poet whatsoever. His Numbers are correct,  
 harmonious, sounding, expressive of the Sense,  
 and rather loftier than those of *Virgil*. He  
 has nothing of *Lucan's* Stiffness, nor of that  
 uniform Smoothness, which characterizes the  
 Verses of *Claudian*.

Verifica-  
 tion.

General  
Charac-  
ter.

IN short, if *Statius* has had *Rapin* and *Bossu* for his Cavillers, he has had *Malherbe*, *Rosteau*, *Marolles* and *Scaliger* for his Admirers: the last of whom thinks, he comes nearest to *Virgil* in Majesty of all Poets either ancient or modern. "He had even come  
" nearer to him (says he) if he had not affected it so much; for being naturally ambitious, whenever he has attempted to excel him, he has degenerated into *Fustian*.  
" Except the *Phœnix*, *Virgil*, he is without  
" Dispute the Prince of both *Latin* and *Greek*  
" Poets. His Verses are better than *Homer's*:  
" he abounds more in Figures, has more  
" poetical Oeconomy, and is more chaste and  
" correct in his moral Sentences."

I SHALL only trouble the Reader with one Quotation more on this Head; and that is from the amiable *Fenelon's* Account of the War between the Ancients and Moderns, in which he fancifully ascertains the Rank and Merits of our Author, as a Poet.

" *Lucan* being mightily incensed to see  
" *Virgil* preferred before him, protested against the Election, and refused to agree  
" on any other Terms, but being at least declared his *Colleague*. Saying in sententious  
" and haughty Verse, if *Virgil* could not suffer an Equal, he was resolved not to endure a Superiour; to which *Virgil* only  
" made

"made Answer with a modest Smile. But  
 "Lucan was hissed at by the whole Assembly  
 "of ancient *Latin* Poets, who well knew  
 "the Distance betwixt him and *Virgil*, and  
 "therefore told him, his Pretensions would  
 "only bear Water amongst some Moderns,  
 "that were not capable of relishing all the  
 "Beauties and Niceties of *Latin* Poesy; nor  
 "could he reasonably carry his Ambition  
 "higher, than to be *Virgil's* Lieutenant. But  
 "he refused the Command, and retiring with  
 "a *Spanish* Gravity, said.

*Victrix causa deis placuit, sed victa Catoni.*

"Giving them to understand, he would seek  
 "Revenge for the Wrong, he believed, they  
 "had done him. *Statius* in his Default was  
 "chosen by *Virgil* for his Lieutenant-Gener-  
 "al, in Preference to *Silius Italicus*, who  
 "pretended a Title to that Employment."

In another Part, speaking of the Arrange-  
 ment of the Forces, the same Author says.  
 "The Army of the *Latin* Poets was drawn  
 "up in Form of Battle on the left of the  
 "*Gracians* upon the same Line. *Virgil* had  
 "posted his *Æneids* in the midst of the Front,  
 "and called them the first Légion, he de-  
 "signed to fight in Person at the Head of  
 "these and named the *Thebaid* of *Statius*  
 "the second, which he disposed on the left

“ of his own Poem; and *Statius* was to se-  
 “ cond *Virgil* at the Head of the Epic.”

To conclude, whoever will read the *Tbe-*  
*baid* in the Original, will find the Author to  
 be a much better Poet, than the World in  
 general imagines, I say, imagines, because  
 two Thirds of the Men of Letters in this  
 Kingdom have never read him; but form  
 their Opinions from the Character given him  
 by some few prejudiced Persons. *Barrichius*  
 has justly observed, that he is the same a-  
 mong the Poets, as *Alexander* was among  
 Heroes. He has many and great Beauties,  
 but they are blended with Defects. He has  
 more Harmony than *Lucan*, and more Spirit  
 than *Silius Italicus*; and one may safely say,  
 that if he is not equal to *Virgil* in some Points,  
 he approaches so near him, as to leave far  
 behind those of his own and after Times.  
 As Nothing throws a greater Lustre on the  
 fine Passages in the *Iliad*, than *Virgil*'s con-  
 descending to copy them; so Nothing is a  
 greater Argument of *Statius*'s Merit, than  
 the verbal Imitations of *Chaucer*, who was  
 perhaps a Poet of the most lively Imagina-  
 tion of any amongst the Moderns. I prefer  
 this to Volumes of Criticism; No one would  
 imitate, what he could exceed. Such there-  
 fore as he is with all his Imperfections, I  
 present him to the Reader, whom I wish



the same Pleasure, that I have found in contemplating his many and great Beauties.

HAVING spoken of the Beauties and Defects of the Original, it may not be improper to acquaint the Reader, what he is to expect in the following Version. The great Inducement to the attempting it was it's not having been wholly translated before. I had long considered it as the most illustrious Work of *Roman Antiquity* after the *Æneid*, and consequently was concerned, that it had never appeared in an *English Dress*. Five Books indeed have been rendered into *English Verse* by T-----rs: Mr. *Pope* made the first speak *English*, and the late ingenious Mr. *Walter Harte* of *St. Mary Hall, Oxon*, the sixth. This is all, that to my Knowledge, has been translated. With more Ambition therefore than Prudence, I begun it soon after I entered at the University, at the Age of eighteen, and must confess, that my chief Merit consists in having had the Patience to go through with it at a Time of Life, which is too often squandered away in a Circle of Follies and Amusements. Those Readers will be very much disappointed, who expect to find a literal Version. The Translator has profited too much from the Fate of others, to attempt it. If he could not be just to the Original in a free Version, he had been much

less so in a close one: such is the Disparity of the two Languages; and of all the *Latin* Authors *Statius* perhaps is the most difficult. It is hoped however, the Liberties, which are taken, will not be deemed too great, nor the Deviations from the Original too many. In the main Parts of the Poem, such as the Fable, Manners and Sentiments, Omissions and Contractions are altogether unpardonable; but in others less essential, where the Variation does not exceed one Word, as the substituting another Epithet to strengthen the Idea, it is presumed, no Man of Candour will be offended. The Abuse of *Triplets* and *Alexandrines* has been very justly objected to: for which Reason the Translator has scrupulously avoided them, and, unless his Memory very much deceives him, has not one of either in the whole Work. The Incorrectness of modern Rhymes has likewise given reasonable Ground for Censure. Great Care has been taken of this Point and the Translator flatters himself that very few bad Rhymes will be found in the whole Poem. If there is now and then a Darkness, there is often a Light in Antiquity, which is best preserved in a literal Version. Whenever the Translator has found this (as indeed he has very frequently) he has always stuck close to the Original. It happens some-  
times

times again, that a whole Passage is so obscure, as not to be rendered *verbatim*; in this Case all that can be done, is to translate in the Lump, and by carefully consulting the Context, give what seems to be the general Sense as briefly and as poetically as one can. A Translator is not accountable for the Faults of the Author. Now it sometimes happens, that a Thought is low and vulgar, an Image not physically true, and a Warrior, who has been killed, described fighting again through a Slip of the Poet's Memory. Whenever therefore the Reader perceives an Inaccuracy of this Kind, he should turn to the Passage in the Original, and not throw the Blame on the Translator, before there is Conviction, he deserves it. If there has been too great a Prolixity in Notes and Quotations, it is but Justice to ascribe it rather to the Desire of gratifying his Pleasure, than displaying his Learning: since it is one of the most agreeable Employments a rational Mind can be engaged in, to compare the Flowers of Genius and Fancy together.

AFTER all the Translator professes himself incapable of doing *Statius* Justice, and always keeping up that Fire and Spirit, which so peculiarly animates the Original. His Abilities are unequal to so arduous a Task, and if they were greater than they are, the

*English*

*English* Language would in many Points fail him. He therefore submits this Version to the Publick, as the First-fruits of his Labours, and sincerely wishes that when his Judgment is matured by Time, he may be able to produce something, which may shew, that their present Indulgence was not entirely thrown away upon him.

**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**B O O K   T H E   F I R S T .**

## THE A R G U M E N T.

**E**TEOCLES and Polynices having dethroned their Father Oedipus King of Thebes, agree to reign alternately. Oedipus invokes the Fury Tisiphone to punish them; she sows Dissention between them. Eteocles is chosen by Lot to reign the first Year. An universal Discontent prevails among the Thebans. Jupiter calls a Council of the Gods, and declares his Intention of punishing Thebes and Argos. He sends Mercury to call up the Ghost of Laius from the Shades. On Eteocles's refusing to give up the Sceptre at the Expiration of his Year, Polynices goes to Argos to solicit the Aid of Adrastus against him. He is overtaken by a heavy Storm, and being very much fatigued, lies down at Adrastus's Gate. Tydeus arrives at the same place by chance. They quarrel and fight. Adrastus, alarmed at the Noise, comes out, reconciles, and entertains them very hospitably. He relates the Origin of a Sacrifice which was then celebrating, and addresses a Prayer to Apollo, which concludes the Book.

# THE THEBAID OF STATIUS.

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## BOOK THE FIRST.

---

OF guilty *Thebes*, to foreign Arms a Prey,  
Fraternal Rage, and impious Lust of Sway,  
My daring Muse wou'd sing, so *Phæbus* deign  
To prompt the Bard, and harmonize the Strain.  
Say, Goddess, whence shall I my Subject trace, 5  
From *Cadmus*, Author of the vicious Race?

Verse 5. *Say, Goddess*] STATIUS has been pretty severely handled by some ingenious Critics among the Moderns for this seeming Doubt where to commence his Narration. Tho' I cannot pretend to exculpate him entirely for running counter to the Rules laid down by *Horace*; yet I cannot but hope, he will appear less worthy of Censure than he has hitherto done, if we suppose, that the Poet judged the greatest Part of his *Roman* Readers ignorant of the *Theban* History (as undoubtedly they were) and yet it was necessary, they should have some previous Knowledge of it, in order to understand his Poem, and the Allusions, he frequently makes to the History and Customs of that Nation. But how were they to be acquainted with it? Was he to have directly collected the Heads of it, and declar'd his Intention? No: that would have been the greatest Affront he could have put upon them, which our Author was sufficiently aware of. Let us admire then the Art and Dexterity of the Poet, who has extricated himself from the Embarrassments he lay under by this polite and ingenious Device. If he has offended, it is a glorious Offence, or (to use the Words of Mr. *Pope*) a Grace snatch'd beyond the Rules of Art.

v. 6. *From Cadmus*] *Cadmus* was the Son of *Agenor*: this obstinate Prince insisted on his travelling in quest of his Sister *Europa*, who had been carried off by *Jupiter* in the Form of a Bull. The Hero comply'd, but not finding his Sister, settled near *Thebes*.

## 2 STATIUS's THEBAID. BOOK I.

Shall I describe him on the raging Sea,  
 Obsequious to the Monarch's stern Decree?  
 Then tell, from whence th'aspiring Nation rose,  
 And to what Source proud *Thebes* its Grandeur owes, 10  
 How soften'd Rocks (so will'd resistless Fate)  
 Danc'd into Form, to grace a future State?  
 What fatal Causes could so far incense  
 The Queen of Heav'n, and what the dire Offence,  
 When *Athamas*, by Wrath divine pursu'd, 15  
 His trembling Hands in filial Blood imbru'd,  
 And his pale Spouse, to shun his angry Bow,  
 Sprung from the Beach, and sought the Depths below?  
 Wave then, whate'er to *Cadmus* may belong,  
 O Muse, and date the Subject of thy Song, 20  
 From wretched *Oedipus*; — nor yet aspire  
 In *Cæsar's* Praise to string thy feeble Lyre,  
 Or tell, how twice he bade the *Rhine* obey,  
 How twice the *Danube* roll'd beneath his Sway:  
 (While *Dacia*, daring impious War to wage, 25  
 Fell the just Object of the Victor's Rage)  
 Or how, in youthful Armour clad, he strove  
 To vindicate the sacred Rights of *Jove*.  
 Nor thou, commission'd in the Rolls of Fate,  
 To swell the Glories of the *Latian* State, 30

v. 11. *How soften'd*] The Poets feign, *Amphion* play'd so sweetly upon the Lyre, that the Stones and Rocks danc'd into Walls and built the City afterwards call'd *Thebes*.

v. 15. *When Athamas*] He was the Father of *Palemon*, and Husband of *Ino*: but being seized with Lunacy thro' the Malice of *Juno*, pursu'd his Children with his Bow and Arrows. Whereupon the wretched Mother leaped into the Sea with one of her Sons.

v. 29. *Nor thou commission'd*] *Virgil* and *Lucan* gave the Precedent of this fullsome and almost impious Flattery, in Compliment to *Augustus*



# BOOK I. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 3

By wild Ambition led away, resign  
 The *Roman* Helm to feeble Hands than thine.  
 What tho' the Stars contract their liquid Space,  
 Well-pleas'd to yield thee a serener Place;  
 Tho' *Phæbus*, conscious of superiour Blaze, 35  
 Wou'd intermix with thine his friendly Rays;  
 And *Jove* his wide-extended Empire share,  
 Content to rule an equal Tract of Air;  
 Yet may thy People's Wishes thee detain,  
 And *Jove* enjoy an undivided Reign. 40  
 The Time will come, when a divinè Flame  
 Shall prompt me to resound thy ripen'd Fame,  
 Meanwhile permit my Muse to seek Renown  
 In *Theban* Wars, a Prelude to thy own.  
 She sings of Souls discordant e'en in Death, 45  
 And Hate, that fled not with the vital Breath;  
 A Throne, for which the vengeful Fates decreed,  
 Two Rival-Kings by mutual Arms should bleed,  
 And scepter'd Chiefs; who long, unbury'd, lay,  
 To Birds and Beasts an undistinguish'd Prey; 50  
 When *Dirce's* Source was stain'd with kindred Gore,  
 And *Thetis* from the Blood-impurpled Shore  
 Beheld *Ismenos* roll a mingled Heap  
 Of Arms and Warriors to the frighted Deep.  
 What first, O *Clio*, shall adorn thy Page, 55  
 Th' expiring Prophet, or *Ætolian's* Rage?  
 Say, wilt thou sing, how grim with hostile Blood,  
*Hippomedon* repell'd the rushing Flood;

*Augustus* and *Nero*. I hope the Reader will dispense with my transcribing the Passages, as they would swell the Compass of these Notes beyond what was intended. — See *Georgics*, Lib. I. & *Pharsalia*, Lib. I.

# 4 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK I.

Lament th' *Arcadian* Youth's untimely Fate,  
Or *Jove*, oppos'd by *Capaneus*, relate? 60

Now *Oedipus*, inur'd to deepest Night;  
No more in Sighs bewails the Loss of Sight;  
And tho' the Rays of *Phabus* ne'er invade  
His dark Abode, or pierce th' eternal Shade,  
Yet Conscience haunts him with reflecting Glass, 65  
Thro' which his Sins, too well distinguish'd, pass.  
Their Torches o'er his Head the Furies rear,  
And Threats and harsh Reproaches grate his Ear.  
Now to th' un pitying Ruler of the Skies  
He lifts the gloomy Sockets of his Eyes, 70  
Then strikes the gaping Void with impious Hands,  
And thus aloud infernal Aid demands.

Ye Gods, who Sway in *Tartarus* maintain,  
Where guilty Spirits howl with endless Pain;  
Thou *Styx*, whose gloomy Banks, and shady Lake 75  
A sad Impression on my Senses make.

*Tisiphone*, on whose repeated Name  
I've dwelt, if *Oedipus* Attention claim,  
Oh! lend an Ear, and from the Realms below  
Accord my Wishes, and assist my Vow. 80

If from my Sire mis-deem'd I took my Way  
To *Cyrrba's* Fane on that important Day,

v. 61. *Now Oedipus*] This is an extremely fine Passage: the latter Part of it alludes to the following Verses in *Euripides*.

ὦ Μῆτερ, κεννώσει. μὴ πίσει με  
Τὰς αἰκιστικὰς, καὶ δρακοντῶν κλέμης.  
Αὐτὰρ γὰρ, αὐτῇ πλεῖστοι θρόνονόσιν. *Orestes*, V. 225.

v. 71. *Then strikes*] I have render'd *Inane Solum* by *Gaping Void* as it is spoken of the Sockets of his Eyes. *Gronovius* and *Mr. Pope* have taken it in the same Sense, in Opposition to the Opinion of *Bernartius* and *Barclay*.

When *Laius* bled beneath these impious Hands,  
 Where the three Paths divide the *Phocian* Lands :  
 If seconded by thee, I durst chastize 85  
 Th' insidious *Sphinx*, and gain'd the glitt'ring Prize ;  
 Or by thy fav'ring Torch conducted, strove  
 To meet with equal Fires *Jocasta's* Love.  
 If studious of thy Cause, I now prepare  
 Two Sons, whose rising Merits claim thy Care ; 90  
 And, too impatient of the vital Light,  
 Forc'd from these streaming Orbs the Balls of Sight :  
 Attend, and aid the Vengeance I request ;  
 If worthy thee, and what thou would'st suggest.  
 My Sons ( if Sons they are ) their Sire disown, 95  
 Spoil'd of his Eyes, and driven from his Throne ;  
 And, while a guideless, helpless Wretch I roam,  
 Deride my Groans in pamp'ring Ease at Home.

Verse 85. *If seconded by thee*] The curious Reader may see the *Sphinx's* Riddle in *Greek*, prefixed to the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of *Sophocles*, *Johnson's* Edition, Volume 2.

v. 95. *My Sons*] The *Oedipus* of *Sophocles* complains in like Manner of his Son's Cruelty, and wishes them a similar Punishment.

Ἄλλ' οἱ θεοὶ σφί μάτη τὴν παρμμένην  
 Ἔρη κερτανοῖσιαι, εἰ δ' ἔμοι τίλος.  
 Αὐτοῖν γένοιτο τῶνδ' τῆς μάχης πῖμα,  
 Ἥς τῶν ἔχονται, καὶ παλαιῶνται δόρυ.  
 Ὡς ἔτ' αἰ δὲ τῶν σπῆπτε, ὅ θρίους ἔχει,  
 Μοῖον, ἔτ' αἰ ἔξληλυθὸς πολλοῖ  
 Ἐλδοι πύτ' αἰθίς, οἷα τὸν φύσαντ' ἐμὲ  
 Οὔτως ἀπῶως πατρίδος ἐξωδαμένο  
 Οὐκ ἴσκει, ἔδ' ἡμῖναι ἀλλ' αἰάσεται  
 Αὐτοῖς ἐπιμφοδῶ, καὶ ἐκκαρῶχθῃ φυγᾶς. V. 434.

There is no Character in the Drama more deserving of our Pity, than that of *Oedipus*. His Sins were chiefly involuntary: The Gods seem to have levelled all their Vengeance at him. This dreadful Imprecation, however, against his own Children blackens his Character, and refutes all the Arguments, which Compassion can suggest in his Favour.

## 6 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK I.

Such is their Pity, such their filial Love,  
 And yet inactive sleep the Bolts of *Jove*: 100  
 Then be the Place of *Jove* by thee supply'd,  
 To check their Insults, and reward their Pride;  
 Let them some lasting Stroke of Vengeance mourn,  
 Which may extend to Ages yet unborn:  
 Give them the Crown, which steep'd in recent Gore,  
 From the cleft Temples of my Sire I tore.  
 Go then, dissolve the sacred Bonds of Peace,  
 Bid Discord rise, and Love fraternal cease:  
 Urge them to dare, what may to latest Times  
 Transmit their Guilt, some yet un-acted Crimes. 110  
 Soon thou'lt experience (do but lead the Way)  
 Their headstrong Wills, impatient of Delay;  
 And in the Out-lines of their Tempers find  
 The truest Portrait of their Father's Mind.  
 The list'ning Fury now prepares to rise, 115  
 And tow'rs the suppliant Wretch directs her Eyes.  
 On sad *Cocytos*' Banks she fate reclin'd,  
 And to the Breeze her flowing Locks resign'd.  
 Her Snakes, unbound, along the Margin glide,  
 Sport on the Waves, or lash the sulph'ry Tide. 120  
 From thence she springs: not swifter Light'nings fly,  
 Or falling Stars, that cleave the mid-way Sky.  
 The Phantoms ken her, as she soars in Air,  
 And to the distant Shades in haste repair.

v. 124. *And to*] *Spencer* seems to have alluded to this Thought in his *Fairy Queen*, B. 6. Canto 6. Stanza.

*Echidna* is a Monster direful dread,  
 Whom Gods do hate, and Heav'ns abhor to see;  
 So hideous is her Shape, so huge her Head,  
 That e'en the hellish Fiends affrighted be,  
 At Sight thereof, and from her Presence flee. }

BOOK I. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 7

Thro' dreary Realms, and *Pluto's* wide Domains 125  
She roams, and soon th' infernal Mansion gains.

The Day beheld her dire Approach, and shrowds  
Her sick'ning Glories in encircling Clouds,

E'en *Atlas* labour'd with unwonted Fears,  
And shook beneath the Burden of the Spheres. 130

From *Malea's* humble Vale she rose in flight,  
And sped to *Thebes*, the Monster's chief Delight.

Not Hell itself, nor the *Tartarean* Coast  
An equal Share of her Esteem can boast.

A hundred Serpents on her Visage glare 135  
With horrid Scales, and mingle with her Hair :

Her Eyes, intrench'd within her bristling Head,  
By Fits, a livid, fainty Splendor shed.

Thus *Cynthia* blushes thro' the Mid-night Shade,  
When magic Charms her lab'ring Beams invade. 140

Her bloated Skin with gather'd Venom teems,  
And her foul Mouth exhales sulphureous Steams.

Disease and Death's annihilating Force  
From hence, as she commissions, bend their Course. . .

Some stiffen'd Rags were o'er her Shoulders thrown, 145  
And the dire Monster by her Drefs was known.

A crested Serpent arm'd her better Hand,  
And in the left she toss'd a flaming Brand.

When now she stood where craggy Cliffs arise, .  
And proud *Cithæron* threatens the neighb'ring Skies, 150

Rang'd on her Head, the scaly Monsters glare,  
And hiss, entwin'd in her envenom'd Hair.

A Signal to the Earth, the Shores resound,  
And *Greece* from far returns the deaf'ning Sound.

v. 153. *A Signal*] This beautiful Passage is undoubtedly imitated  
from *Virgil*, *Æneid* : Lib. 7. Verse 511.

## 8. STATIUS'S THEBAID. Book I.

The distant Summons fam'd *Parnassus* took, 155  
 And old *Eurotas* from it's Summit shook :  
 Huge *Oete* nods, half sunk with all her Pines,  
 And *Isthmos* scarce the parted Waves disjoins ;  
 While starting at the shock, *Leucotboe* press'd  
 The young *Palamon* closer to her Breast. 160  
 The Fury to the Palace now had come,  
 And shaded with her Wings the splendid Dome,  
 When here and there each furious Brother flies,  
 And Rage the Place of mutual Love supplies :  
 While Jealousy and Hate-ingend'ring Fears 165  
 Flame in their Breasts, and haunt their cred'lous Ears.  
 Their restless Minds then wild Ambition fires  
 To break the League, and deadly Wrath inspires.

At Dea——

Pastorale canit signum cornuque recurvo  
 Tartaream intendit vocem : qua protinus omne  
 Contremuit nemus, & silvæ intonuere profundæ.  
 Audiit & Triviæ longe Lacus, audiit amnis  
 Sulfuræâ *Nar* albus aquâ, fontesque Velini :  
 Et trepidæ matres pressere ad pectora natos.

Who copied it from *Apollonius Rhodius*, *Argon.* L. 4. V. 129,

—— Ροζὺ δὲ πυχάρου, ἀμφὶ δὲ μακρὰς  
 Ἥϊους ποταμῶ, ἢ πάντων ἰσχνὴν ἅλσος.  
 Ἐκλυοὶ οἱ ἢ πολλοὶ ἑκαστὸν πᾶντος αἰῆς  
 Καλχιδὰ γὰρ ἵκοντο παρὰ προχρῶσι χερσὶ,  
 Ὃς δακρυδαίμονες ποταμὸν καλαδόντος Ἀρξίου,  
 Φασὶδὶ συμφιρεται ἱερὸν ῥοόν, οἱ δὲ σὺν ἄρφω  
 Κωνκασίῃ ἀλλὰ εἰς ἱλαμμέναι ἀσχερῶσιν,  
 Διιματὶ δ' ἐξίγροντο λακωίδις, ἀμφὶ δὲ παῖσι  
 Νηπιαχῶς, οὐτιςφιν ὑπ' ἀγκυλιόσσει ἰαίον  
 Ροζὺν παλαμῶνις, χερσὶ βαλοὶ ἀγκυλοῦσαι.

This Stroke of Nature is tender and affecting to the last Degree.  
 Others would have been satisfied to have been mentioned the Effects  
 of this dreadful Blast upon the Woods and Mountains. *Virgil* knew,  
 that this Circumstance of the Mother's catching their Infants to  
 their Breasts would more touch and interest his Readers, than all  
 the other pompous Images, great as they are. *Warton's Virgil.*

Their haughty Souls superior Pow'r disown,  
 And scorn th' alternate Splendors of a Crown. 170  
 Such Discord rises from divided Sway,  
 When each will rule, and neither will obey.  
 As two young Steers, when first compell'd to bow  
 Their stubborn Necks, and trail the galling Plow,  
 Frisk here and there, impatient of the Toil, 175  
 And spread Disorder o'er the furrowy Soil.  
 Thus Discord arms the Brothers in her Cause,  
 And urges them to cancel Nature's Laws.  
 First they decreed, that each in Turn should wear  
 The Diadem in his successive Year. 180  
 Unhappy Youths, no longer doom'd to prove  
 The Joys of Friendship, and fraternal Love !  
 While that in Exile mourns his present State,  
 This dreads, alas ! the same impending Fate.  
 Nor long this League withheld their impious Hands, 185  
 From executing Discord's dire Commands :  
 But e'er one Year was clos'd, they both gave way  
 To fierce Contention, and Desire of Sway.  
 Yet then no Gates of Iv'ry did unfold  
 The Palace, beaming with *Barbaric* Gold, 190  
 No polish'd Arches, fram'd of *Parian* Stone,  
 Beneath th' incumbent Dome in Order shone,  
 No Guards, reclining on erected Spears,  
 Essay'd to chase the sleepless Tyrant's Fears.  
 Nor curious Gems, inlaid with Art divine, 195  
 Flam'd on the Brim, and sparkled in the Wine.  
 Meer Lust of Pow'r the Rival-Brothers arms,  
 And fills a narrow Realm with War's Alarms.  
 But while their Claims yet undetermin'd stand,  
 And none enjoys in Peace supreme Command ; 200

Law gives a Sanction to injurious Might,  
 And Pow'r is hallow'd with the Name of Right.  
 Say, Rivals, why ye rush to mutual Death,  
 And why so lavish of your vital Breath?  
 Not all th' united Realms, which *Sol* surveys, 205  
 Adorn'd with orient, or declining Rays,  
 When to the South he bends his rapid Course,  
 Or the bleak North enjoys his temp'rate Force.  
 Not all the Wealth that fertile *Tyre* can boast,  
 Nor all that glitters on the *Phrygian* Coast, 210  
 Could claim such Deeds, or merit such Regard,  
 Were all those Realms the Conqueror's Reward.  
 Mean while the Lots for the first Year were thrown,  
 And proud *Eteocles* ascends the Throne.  
 How grateful then, O Tyrant, was the Day. 215  
 When all around were subject to thy Sway!  
 How pleas'd, without Contention to devour  
 The wish'd-for Sweets of undivided Pow'r!

And now the disaffected *Thebans* vent  
 In whisper'd Tales their growing Discontent. 220  
 To th' absent Prince in secret they adhere,  
 And curse the slow Progression of the Year.  
 Then one, by Nature ready to complain,  
 Alike dissatisfy'd with every Reign,  
 Well taught to feed rebellious Faction's Flame, 225  
 And brand with Calumny the royal Name,  
 Exclaim'd aloud.—Shall then the *Theban* State  
 Feel each Vicissitude of cruel Fate;  
 Still must our slavish Necks with Patience bear  
 Th' alternate Yoke of each tyrannic Heir? 230  
 Who now reverse our Fates, divide the Land,  
 And hold inferior Fortune at Command.



For e'er shall *Thebes* her sad Condition mourn,  
 And dread each exil'd Tyrant's quick Return?  
 Is this thy fixt Decree, Almighty *Jove*, 235  
 Is this a Proof of thy paternal Love?  
 Was this a Curse entail'd upon our Race?  
 Say, from what Time the Omen we may trace?  
 When *Cadmus* fought his Sister on the Main,  
 Sow'd with the Serpent's Teeth the fertile Plain, 240  
 And, forc'd on fair *Baotia*'s Soil by Fate,  
 Laid the Foundation of the *Theban* State?  
 See, how elate with Pride our King appears,  
 Free from Competitors, and void of Fears!  
 What threat'ning Looks he wears, as if again 245  
 He scorn'd to yield his temporary Reign.  
 Yet none before was easier of Access,  
 More affable, or prone to give Redress.  
 Nor wonder we.—He was not then alone,  
 Nor without Dread of a divided Throne. 250  
 While we stand here, a patient servile Band,  
 Prepar'd to act, whate'er our Lords' command.  
 As when two Winds contend with adverse Force,  
 And influence by Turns the Vessel's Course,  
 On this Side now, obsequious to the Blast, 255  
 Now there she nods, and still obeys the last.

v. 253. *As when*] It has been observed of *Statius*, that he shines particularly in Descriptions and Similies; and I will venture to say, this is not the worst of the latter in the whole Work. *Mediæ mutat Fortuna carinæ*, is a fine Expression, and its Spirit unattainable in *English* Verse. However, if Similies are any where unreasonable, they certainly are in Speeches, and especially those delivered with any Warmth. I have somewhere seen *Virgil* censured for putting so many Similies in *Aeneas*'s Mouth, during the Narration of his Adventures to *Dido*.

Thus fares our State, between the doubtful Sway  
 Of either Prince, unknowing which to obey.  
 Distracted, tortur'd with Suspense she stands,  
 While this repeats his Threats, and that commands. 260  
 Mean while the King of Heav'n, imperial Jove  
 Convenes a Synod of the Pow'rs above;  
 Full in the midst, enthron'd, the Thund'rer late,  
 Sublime in all the Pomp of regal State.  
 Beneath his piercing Eye, in full Survey, 265  
 The spacious Earth, and Seas contracted lay.  
 His Brow was void of Frowns, serene his Look,  
 Yet at his Nod the whole Creation shook.  
 Their heav'nly King the rising Senate greet,  
 And at his Word resume their starry Seat. 270  
 Inferior Gods from ev'ry Quarter come,  
 By Rank distinguish'd in the starry Dome.  
 None absent were of all, whose Force can bind,  
 Or on the Deep discharge the furious Wind.  
 No rosy Dryad of the shady Wood, 275  
 Nor azure Sister of the chrystal Flood.  
 But here, obedient to their Sov'reign's Will,  
 The Winds are silent, and the Waves lie still.

v. 261. *Mean while*] This Description is every Way suitable to those refined Ideas our Author had of the supreme Being. The Images are as grand as the human Mind can conceive, or Fancy represent of such an Assembly; and the Harangue of Jove does not baulk the great Expectations the preceding Description had raised of him.

——— *Grave & immutabile sanctis*  
*Pondus adeſt verbis, & vocem fata ſequuntur.*

is not more sublime than concise and expreſſive: the Senſe of which an *Italian* or *French* Poet would have ſcarce comprized in fix or eight Verſes, I ſhould want common Juſtice, if I deny'd Mr. *Pope* the Praise ſo juſtly deſerved from the Tranſlation of this Paſſage, which the Reader may compare with the Beginning of the tenth *Æneid*.

BOOK I. STATIUS's THEBAID. 13

Thro' Heav'n's Expanse a gath'ring Horror rolls,  
 And huge Olympus trembles to the Poles. 280  
 With Rays serene the wreathed Pillars glare,  
 And a new Lustre gilds the Fields of Air.  
 Is Tremors now the Globe began to cease,  
 And Nature lay resign'd to downy Peace;  
 When thus the Thund'rer spoke: assenting Fate 285  
 On ev'ry Accent stamp'd resistless Weight.  
 Say, must I still of human Crimes complain,  
 And must the Thund'rer's Bolts be hurl'd in vain?  
 Why seek they thus my tardy Wrath to prove,  
 And scorn my proffer'd Clemency and Love? 290  
 While yet the *Cyclops* ply their Arms no more,  
 And *Ætna* weeps for her exhausted Store:  
 For this I suffer'd head-strong *Phaeton*  
 To mount the Car of the reluctant Sun;  
 And *Neptune* bad th' imprison'd Waters flow, 295  
 And Hills and Vales no more Distinction know:  
 But all in vain; our Vengeance they defy,  
 And triumph o'er the Ruler of the Sky.  
 To punish these, I leave the Realms above,  
 A Race descended from Imperial *Jove*: 300  
 With *Perseus Argos*' Sons Alliance claim,  
 From *Cadmus Thebes* derives immortal Fame.  
 Who has not heard of wretched *Cadmus*' Fate,  
 And the long Labours of the *Theban* State?  
 When from the silent Regions of the Night, 305  
 The Furies sprang, and rush'd to mortal Fight.  
 Why should I publish the fierce Mother's Shame,  
 And Deeds, the Pow'rs of Heav'n would blush to name?  
 Before I cou'd recount their num'rous Crimes  
 From *Cadmus*' Days unto the present Times, 310

*Phæbus* wou'd seek the Chambers of the Main,  
 And rise to gild the Courts of Heav'n again.  
 Say, without Horror can the Tale be read  
 Of *Laius* slain, and his dishonour'd Bed?  
 Dire Monster! first to cause his Father's Death! 315  
 Then stain the Womb, from whence he drew his Breath.  
 Yet th' angry Pow'rs he satisfies with Groans,  
 And Gloom eternal for his Sins atones.  
 No more he breathes at large our upper Air,  
 But feeds the Worms of Conscience with Despair. 320  
 Yet say, what Fury cou'd his Sons inspire  
 Thus to torment their old, unhappy Sire;  
 To trample on his Eyes with impious Feet,  
 And hurl him headlong from the regal Seat?  
 Then let us pity him; nor let in vain 325  
 The wretched King of filial Rage complain;  
 Hence shall it be my Bus'ness to redress  
 His Wrongs, and crown his Wishes with Success.  
 The Day shall come, when Discord from afar  
 Shall give whole Nations to the Waste of War; 330  
 When the whole guilty Race in Fight shall fall,  
 And one incircling Ruin swallow all.  
*Adrastus* shall in dire Alliance join  
 With Heaven, and compleat the Fate's Design.  
 Nor let proud *Argos* triumph: 'Tis decred, 335  
 That she amid the gen'ral Carnage bleed:  
 The Craft of *Tantalus*, and impious Feast  
 Yet wake my Vengeance, and inflame my Breast.  
 Then *Juno*, impotent of Passion, broke  
 Her fullen Silence, and with Fury spoke. 340

v, 339. *Then Juno*] The *Juno* in *Statius* is the same with that of the *Iliad* and *Æneid*. Her *summum bonum* is of the negative Kind,

Why urge me thus to Deeds of martial Rage,  
 Shall *Juno* still in mortal Strife engage?  
 Thou know'st, no Mortals merit more my Grace,  
 Than *Argos*, and the fam'd *Inachian* Race,  
 By me for e'er enrich'd, and taught to wield 345  
 With sure Success the Weapons of the Field.  
 Tho' there thy Wiles, and providential Care  
 O'ercame the Keeper of the *Pharian* Fair,  
 And the fam'd *Argive* was debauch'd of old,  
 Too fond, alas! of all-bewitching Gold. 350  
 Yet these obscurer Crimes I could forgive,  
 Did not proud *Thebes* my stifled Ire revive;  
 Where *Jove* in all his dazling Glory shone,  
 And hurl'd the Bolts to *Juno* due alone.  
 Let punish'd *Thebes* absolve th' injurious Deed, 355  
 Nor both beneath divided Vengeance bleed.  
 But if, tenacious of thy Right divine,  
 Thoult thwart my Will, and frustrate my Design,  
 Descend from Heav'n, fulfill thy stern Desire,  
 Raze *Samos*, wrap *Mycenæ's* Walls in Fire, 360  
 The guiltless *Spartan* Race at once confound,  
 And their fair Structures level with the Ground.

and consists chiefly in the Gratification of a contradicting and perverse Temper. She has always some Favourites to shelter from the just Vengeance of *Jove*, and her Intreaties for Pardon, or Incitements to Punishment are the Effects of the blindest Partiality, or most inveterate Prejudice. She will not permit *Argos* to partake of the Punishment of *Thebes*, but hurries *Jupiter* on to put his Threats in Execution against the latter, which had been an Eye-witness of his Adultery.

v. 353. *Where Jove*] The aspiring *Semele* would admit the Embraces of *Jupiter* on no other Condition, than his coming to her encircled with Thunder and Lightning, as he was wont to *Juno*. The unfortunate Fair succeeded in her Wishes, but perished in the Completion of them.

With Incense why shou'd *Juno's* Altars blaze,  
 And joyful *Paeans* swell the Note of Praise?  
 Transfer to more deserving *Isis'* Fane 365  
 The fatten'd Victim, destin'd to be slain.  
 For her in *Egypt* bid the Timbrel sound,  
 And *Nile* from ev'ry Mouth her Praise rebound.  
 But if thou wilt chastize the present Age,  
 And sacrifice whole Nations to thy Rage, 370  
 If thou wilt trace obliterated Crimes  
 From the dark Annals of preceding Times,  
 Say, from what Period then it is decreed,  
 And to what Time the guilty World shall bleed.  
 Begin, from whence in many a winding Maze 375  
 To the *Sicilian* Stream *Alpheus* strays :  
 There dire *Arcadia's* Swains presum'd to found  
 Thy sacred Temple on polluted Ground ;  
 Where stern *Oenomaus'* Car was wont to stand,  
 And mould'ring Skulls lie scatter'd on the Sand. 380  
 Since such Oblations please. since patient *Jove*  
 Yet courts the Shades of *Ida's* guilty Grove,  
 And favours *Creta*, whose impious Sons presume  
 To shew the King of Heav'n's fictitious Tomb ;  
 In *Argos* let thy Spouse unenvy'd reign, 385  
 And share the mystic Honours of the Fane :  
 Nor waste in Fight a Race deriv'd from *Jove*,  
 A Race, whose Merits claim paternal Love.  
 Let more detested Realms in Wars engage,  
 And feel the sad Effects of filial Rage. 390

v. 379. *Where stern Oenomaus'*] *Oenomaus* was Father of *Hippodame*.  
 His Daughter was promised in Marriage to any one who should excel him in a Chariot-Race; but the Loss of Victory was to be attended with immediate Death. The Skulls here mentioned, were those of the eleven Suitors, who had failed in the Attempt.

Thus strove in vain th' indignant Queen of Air,  
 And blended in her Speech Reproach and Prayer;  
 Unmov'd remains the Ruler of the Skies,  
 And thus with Calmness from his Throne replies.  
 'Twas thus I deem'd the Queen of Heav'n wou'd plead,  
 Whene'er the Fate of *Argos* was decreed:  
 Nor less might *Bacchus* thwart the Will of Fate,  
*Bacchus*, the Guardian of the *Theban* State,  
 But he not dares the lifted Bolt to stay,  
 Reveres our Pow'r, and gives the Vengeance Way. 400  
 For by thy Waves, tremendous *Styx*! that flow  
 Thro' the drear Realms of gliding Ghosts below,  
 Not all the Gods, who reign in Heav'n above,  
 Shall change this fixt Decree, or influence *Jove*.  
 Thus have I sworn, and what I swear, shall stand, 405  
 That none but *Jove* shall exercise Command.  
 Haste then, my Son, our Orders to perform,  
 Mount the fleet Wind, and ride the rapid Storm,  
 To *Pluto's* Realms with willing Haste repair,  
 And summon *Laius* to the Fields of Air, 410  
 Whose shiv'ring Ghost with lifted Hands implores  
 A speedy Passage to the farther Shores.

v. 401. *For by thy Waves*] This was the most customary Oath among the Gods, and the greatest they could take; whatever had obtained the Sanction of it, was esteemed inviolable.

*Stygii per flumina fratris,  
 Per pice torrentes, atraque voragine ripas,  
 Annuit.*

*Æn.* 10. v. 13.

And again,

*Adjuro Stygii caput implacabile fontis,  
 Una superstitio superis quæ reddita divis.*

*Lib.* 12. v. 816.

v. 411. *Whose shiv'ring*] The Souls of the deceased wandered a  
 B hundred

Let his proud Grandson, taught by him, disown  
 The mutual Compact, nor resign the Crown  
 To banish'd *Polynices*, who relies 415  
 On *Tydeus*, and his Argive Sire's Supplies.  
 From hence shall spring the Seeds of mutual Hate,  
 The rest shall follow in the Course of Fate.  
 Swift as the Word, the sprightly Son of *May*  
 Prepares th' Almighty's Orders to obey: 420

hundred Years, before they were admitted to pass the River *Stryx*.  
*Virgil* introduces some departed Souls in the same State as *Laius*.

*Stabant orantes primi transmittere cursum,  
 Tendebantque manus ripæ ulterioris amore.* Æn. 6. v. 313.

v. 419. *Swift as the Word*] This Description of *Mercury* is imitated from *Virgil's* in the fourth Æneid, v. 238.

— Ille patris magni parere parabat  
 Imperio: et primum pedibus talaria nectit  
 Aurea quæ sublimem alis, sive æquora supra,  
 Seu terram, rapido pariter cum flamine portant.  
 Tum virgam capit: hac animas ille evocat orco  
 Pallentes, alias sub tristia Tartara mittit,  
 Dat somnos adimitque & lumina morte resignat.

Who took it from *Homer*, *Iliad*, Lib. 24, Verse 339.

Ὅς ἔφατ', ἐδ' ἀπιδῆσι λήκτορος Ἀργεΐφοντος.  
 Αὐτίκ' ἔπειθ' ὑπὲρ πτεσὶν ἰδύσατο καλὰ πίδαλα,  
 Ἀμύρσια, χρύσεια, τὰ μιν φέρον ἡμὲν ἐφ' ὕγρην,  
 Ἢδ' ἐπ' ἀπύρονα γαῖαν, ἀμὰ πτοίῃς ἀνέμοιο.  
 Εἰλπετο δὲ ῥέεσθαι τῇ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα δίλγχοι  
 Ὅν' ἰθὺίη, τὺς δ' αὖτε κ' ὑπνέοντας ἐγχεῖν.

*Tasso* has likewise improved it with many additional Images in his  
 Description of the Angel *Gabriel*, *Gierus*: Lib. Canto 1. Stanza 13.

Così parlògli, e *Gabriel* s' accinse  
 Veloce ad essequir l' imposte cose.  
 La sua forma invisibil d' aria cinse,  
 Ed al senso mortal la sottopose.  
 Umane membra, aspetto uman si finse:  
 Mà di celeste maestà il compose,  
 Trà giovane, e fanciullo età confine  
 Prese, & ornò di raggi il biondo crine.



The glitt'ring Sandals to his Feet applies,  
 And to his Heels the well-trim'd Pinion ties.  
 His Hat's wide-spread Circumference confines  
 The starry Radiance, that around him shines.  
 He grasps the Wand, which draws from hollow Graves,  
 Or drives the trembling Shades to *Stygian* Waves;  
 With magic Power seals the watchful Eye  
 In Slumbers soft, or causes Sleep to fly.  
 From the vast Height with swift Descent he springs;  
 (A slender Gale supports his steady Wings) 430  
 Then thro' th' etherial Void conspicuous flew,  
 And a long Trail of Light behind him drew.  
 Mean while from *Thebes* the banish'd Hero roves  
 Thro' barren Tracts, and wide *Aonian* Groves;

Ali bianche vesti, c' han d' or le cime  
 Infaticabilmente agili, e preste:  
 Fende i venti, e le nubi, e va sublime  
 Sovra la terra, e sovra il mar con queste:

These are all inferior to *Milton's* Description of the Angel *Raphael*.

— Six Wings he wore, to shade  
 His Lineaments divine; the Pair that clad  
 Each Shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his Breast  
 With regal Ornament; the middle Pair  
 Girt like a starry Zone, his Waist and round  
 Skirted his Loins and Thighs, with downy Gold,  
 And Colours dip'd in Heav'n: the third his Feet  
 Shadow'd from either Heel with feather'd Mail,  
 Sky-tinctur'd Grain: like *Maia's* Son he stood  
 And shook his Plumes, that heav'nly Fragrance fill'd  
 The Circuit wide.

*Par. Lost*, B. 5.

v. 433. *Mean while*] The Art of characterizing is perhaps less understood than any one Branch in the whole Province of Poetry: and indeed it may be alledged, that the Qualifications requisite for it are acquired with great Difficulty, and can result only from the most penetrating Sagacity, joined to an intimate Acquaintance with and long Study of human Nature. Young Poets are apt to describe Man, as he ought to be, and not as he is, never considering that a compleatly good Man is little less than a Monster. Our Poet has

And while the flatt'ring Hopes of distant Sway 435  
 Chear the bleak Horrors of the tedious Way,  
 The partial Signs enlarge their heav'nly Space;  
 And the Sun seems to run a double Race:  
 His Cares arise with each revolving Ray,  
 And Night renews the Labours of the Day. 440  
 In Prospect he prevents his future Joy,  
 And snatches at the visionary Toy,  
 Surveys the glitt'ring Tow'rs of *Thebes* his own,  
 Or deals out Justice from a fancied Throne.  
 Wou'd Fate permit, he'd give an Age away, 445  
 And lavish all on one luxurious Day:  
 Despair renews, now Hope dispells his Gloom,  
 And fruitless Wishes all his Joys consume.  
 The Prince at length resolves to seek for Aid,  
 Where *Danaus* once th' *Inacbian* Sceptre sway'd, 450  
 From whence th' indignant Sun withdrew his Light,  
 And hid the Tyrant's Crimes in sudden Night:  
 And now, impell'd by Furies, Chance or Fate,  
 He rush'd impetuous from the well-known Gate,  
 And quits the Caves, where howling Matrons toil, 455  
 And slaughter'd *Pentheus* fertiliz'd the Soil;  
 Then views from whence *Cithæron*'s less'ning Steep  
 Receives its Limits from th' adjoining Deep,  
 Or trembling hangs on *Scyron*'s noted Rock,  
 And from afar surveys the wat'ry Shock. 460

avoided this Defect, and always interspersed the manly Conduct of his Heroes with some Spices of Folly and Weakness; nay, he has sometimes fallen into the other Extreme, and painted Men rather worse than they really are.

v. 456. *And slaughter'd*] *Pentheus* was the Son of *Ecbion* and *Agave*; and torn to Pieces by his Mother and Sisters for despising the Rites of *Bacchus*.

To *Megara* the Warrior next repairs,  
 Fam'd for the Rape of *Nisus*' purple Hairs,  
 From thence the Straits of *Corinth* passes o'er,  
 And hears the Billows break on either Shore.  
 Now *Phæbus*, conscious of exhausted Light, 465  
 Relinquish his Empire to succeeding Night,  
 And rising *Cynthia* thro' the Realms above  
 Her Dew-bespangled Car in Silence drove.  
 All Things were hush'd: Sleep quits the Fields of Air,  
 And steals upon the watchful Miser's Care: 470  
 No future Toils alarm his peaceful Breast,  
 Steep'd in Oblivion, and consign'd to Rest.  
 Yet no red Cloud, edg'd with a golden Ray,  
 Foretold the glad Approach of hast'ning Day,  
 No faint Reflection of the Sun invades 475  
 The Night, or glimmers on the less'ning Shades:  
 From Earth ascending, thicker Vapours roll,  
 Form one black Mist, and darken either Pole.  
 The Winds arise, and with tumultuous Rage  
 The gath'ring Horrors of the Storm presage; 480

v. 465. *Now Phæbus*] This is an Imitation of that fine Description in the fourth Book of *Virgil's Æneid*, v. 522.

Nox erat, & placidam carpebant fessa soporem  
 Corpora per terras, silvæque & sæva quierant  
 Æquora; cum medio volvuntur sidera lapsu,  
 Cum tacet omnis ager: pecudes, pictæque volucres,  
 Quæque lacus late liquidos, quæque aspera Dumis,  
 Rura tenent, somno positæ sub nocte silent.  
 Lenibant curas, & corda oblita laborum.

But the *Curis inserpit somnus avaris* is a Circumstance, which *Virgil* has not taken notice of, and highly worth our Attention.

v. 477. *From Earth ascending*] The Art of the Poet in working up this Description deserves our greatest Applause. We are led Step by Step from one Degree of Horror to another, till all the Elements are put in Action, and the Storm is arrived at its greatest Height.

And whilst in Heav'n superior Sway they claim,  
 Earth labours, and resounds the starry Frame.  
 But *Auster* chiefly checks the breaking Light,  
 In clouds incircled, and renews the Night;  
 Then opes the Sluices of the pregnant Sky, 485  
 And bids the Tempest from each Quarter fly,  
 Which the fierce North, ere finish'd was its Course,  
 Congeals to Show'rs of Hail with wond'rous Force.  
 The Thunder rolls, with Lightning Aether glows,  
 And bursting Clouds unwearied Fires disclose. 490  
 Now *Nemea*, now *Arcadia's* cloud-capt Hills  
 Pour on the Subject Vales their murmur'ing Rills.  
 His Waves in Troops old *Inachus* sends forth,  
 And *Erasinus*, rising to the North.  
 Where late was Dust, unnumber'd Billows roar, 495  
 And *Lerna* spews around its liquid Store:  
 Nor Art, nor Nature can the War sustain;  
 Mounds fail, and Damms are interpos'd in vain.  
 Beneath its Force the tallest Oaks give Way,  
 And gaping Groves admit a sudden Day; 500  
 Roots, Leaves and Boughs are hurry'd o'er the Wood,  
 Float on the Waves, and swell the loaded Flood.  
 Meantime the *Theban* views with wond'ring Eyes  
 The rocky Ruin, that around him flies:  
 Now rural Cots, and Sheep-folds borne away 505  
 By the mad Whirlwind's unresisted Sway,  
 Then Show'r-fed Rivers from the Mountain's Height  
 Strike his quick Ear, and fill his Soul with Fright.  
 Yet not more slow, unknowing where he strays,  
 The madding Youth thro' dark and trackless Ways 510  
 Pursues his Course: Fear follows close behind,  
 And his stern Brother's Image haunts his Mind.

As fares a Mariner, when Storms arise  
 And clouded *Phæbe* quits th' unwilling Skies,  
 Nor shines the Northern Wain : amid the Strife 515  
 Of Heav'n and Ocean, thoughtful for his Life,  
 And doubtful, whether to expect his Death  
 From Storms above, or Dangers underneath,  
 Starts at the Thunder, which around him rolls,  
 Or dreads Destruction from the neighb'ring Shoals. 520  
 Not less perplex'd, the *Theban* Warrior roves  
 Thro' shadowy Thickets, and surrounding Groves.  
 In vain the Brambles his huge Shield oppose,  
 His Courage to his Toils superior rose ;  
 Till now he views, where from *Larissa's* Brow 525  
 The shelving Walls with Light reflected glow ;  
 Thither he posts, and from *Prosymna's* Plain  
 Surveys the sacred Grove, and *Juno's* Fane ;  
 And on the right fam'd *Lerna's* Lake beheld,  
 Where fierce *Alcides* the fierce *Hydra* quell'd. 530  
 At length he pass'd the Gates, which open lay,  
 And to the royal Dome pursu'd his Way ;  
 O'er the cold Marble then his Limbs he threw,  
 And sought in Sleep his Vigour to renew.  
*Adrastus* o'er fair *Argos* Sway maintain'd, 535  
 And long in Peace the hoary Prince had reign'd ;  
 He drew his Birth on both Sides from above,  
 And claim'd Alliance with Almighty *Jove*.  
 Fate would not with a manly Offspring crown  
 His nuptial Bed. Two Daughters heir'd his Throne, 540

v. 435. *Adrastus* o'er] The Character and Circumstances of *Adrastus* have a great Resemblance with those of *Latinus*. He has no Son, and receives an oracular Injunction concerning the Marriage of his Daughters.

To him *Apoll'o*, monstrous to relate !  
 Disclos'd the Secrets of unerring Fate,  
 And said. ——— expect thy Sons on *Argos'* Shore,  
 A tawny Lion, and a bristling Boar.  
 Long this revolv'd within his tender Breast, 545  
 Engross'd his Thoughts, and broke his nightly Rest;  
 Long sage *Amphiaraus* essay'd in vain  
 This seeming Menace of the Gods t' explain,  
 At length perceiv'd the Pow'rs' superior Will,  
 And Fate oppos'd to his predicting Skill. 550  
 Here *Tydeus*, by resistless Fortune led,  
 From *Caledon's* suspected Vengeance fled,  
 And strove, too conscious of his Brother slain,  
 His People's Love by Absence to regain.  
 Long sought the toiling Chief a safe Retreat 555  
 From the rough Storm, till Chance directs his Feet  
 To the same Place, where, stretch'd upon the Ground,  
 The *Theban* Warrior a like Shelter found.  
 But Discord, ever fond of human Blood,  
 Forbids the Chiefs to plan each other's Good; 560  
 Nor suffers them beneath one Roof to share  
 A common Shelter from th' inclement Air.  
 Awhile harsh Words, and mingled Threats delay  
 Th' alternate Labours of the bloody Fray :

v. 559. *But Discord*] We are now entering upon that Part which has done *Statius* so much Hurt in the Eyes of the Critics, and where we must leave him without offering a single Word in his Defence. He has undoubtedly erred very much in the Choice of this Episode: not that the Piece itself, detached from the rest of the Poem, is destitute of Merit, but because it should not have had a Place in the *Epopœia*, and especially at this Juncture. It is remarkable, that Mr. *Pope* has omitted the whole in his Translation of this Book, in my Opinion, the strongest Proof of its unseasonable Insertion.

Then, of their Garments strip'd, they both engage, 565  
 And mutual Blows succeed to mutual Rage.  
 With Youth and Stature flush'd, the *Theban* glows,  
 And on his lowly Rival deals his Blows ;  
 But valiant *Tydeus*, tho' his dwarfish Size  
 Cou'd promise little to the partial Eyes, 570  
 With greater Confidence arose to fight,  
 And Courage that disown'd superior Might.  
 With swift repeated Strokes their Hands fly round  
 Their Heads and Cheeks ; their crackling Jaws resound:  
 Thick as in War an Iron Tempest flies, 575  
 Or Hail, that quits in rattling Show'rs the Skies.  
 Thus, when the Trumpet's clanging Sound proclaims  
 The wish'd Renewal of th' Olympic Games,  
 When Clouds of Dust from ev'ry Part ascend,  
 And equal Chance suspends th' impatient Friend, 580  
 The diff'rent Clamours of the Pit engage  
 The list'ning Rivals, and provoke their Rage,  
 While, from afar each partial Mother eyes  
 The Contest, and foredooms her Son the Prize;  
 Thus Hatred, not Desire of Praise provokes 585  
 The sprightly Chiefs, and arms their heavy Strokes.  
 Their Eyes start inward from beneath each Blow,  
 And from their Faces bloody Currents flow.  
 Now had each vig'rous Candidate for Fame  
 With flaming Sword renew'd his double Claim, 590  
 And the proud *Theban*, stretch'd beneath the Hand  
 Of *Tydeus*, dy'd with Gore a foreign Strand ;

v. 569. *Tho' his dwarfish Size*] The dwarfish Size and Stature of *Tydeus* are taken notice of also by *Homer*, in *Minerva's* Speech to *Diomedes*. Il. B. 5. V. 800.

Ἡ ἀλγὸν οἱ πάντες ἰσχυρὰ γένετο Τυδείδης,  
 Τυδείδης τοι μικρὸς μὲν ἦν δέμας, ἀλλὰ μαχητή.

But old *Adrastus*, who with Cares oppress'd,  
 Sigh'd for the distant Joys of balmy Rest,  
 With Wonder heard th' unwonted Clamours rise, 595  
 And deep-fetch'd Groans, that eccho'd thro' the Skies.  
 But when, *Aurora* bringing back the Day,  
 Thro' the wide op'ning Gates he took his Way,  
 And saw their manly Features rough with Blood,  
 And their gash'd Cheeks emit a Crimson Flood, 600  
 He thus exclaims. — Say, what provokes your Rage,  
 O foreign Youths, and why ye thus engage?  
 (For sure my Subjects wou'd not dare to stain  
 My Courts with Blood, and *Cynthia's* Rule prophane)  
 Say, is the Day too scanty, or the Night 605  
 Once sacred to Repose, reserv'd for Fight?  
 But come, your Country, Birth, and Names relate,  
 Say, whither bound, and whence this mutual Hate?  
 For such high Spirit, and Resentment shows  
 A Breast, that with no common Ardour glows, 610  
 And in that Stream of Honour we may trace  
 A gen'rous Birth, and more than vulgar Race.  
 Scarce had he spoke, when in a mingled Din  
 The Chiefs abash'd with mutual Shame, begin  
 Useless are Words, O King, when Wounds display 615  
 The bloody Labours of this casual Fray.

v. 605. *Say, is the Day*] To say that this Part of *Adrastus's* Conduct is copied from that of *Evander* on a similar Occasion, is to tell the Reader what he must know already. Both Princes are engaged in performing their annual Vows to the Gods, when the Strangers arrive in their Territories, and both give an Account of the Rite of the Solemnities: but if general Observations should fail of confirming what I have advanced, the Passages from *Virgil*, which I shall quote as they occur, will sufficiently justify it.



BOOK I. STATIUS'S THEBAID. . 27

In vain they strive, while mutual Scoffs confound  
 Their different Accents, and perplex the Sound,  
 Till glowing with the Prospect of Relief,  
 Intrepid *Tydeus* thus imparts his Grief. 620  
 From fam'd *Ætolia's* Monster-bearing Plains ]  
 I stray'd an Exile, till in your Domains  
 The Night my Progress check'd : and shall he dare  
 Deny me Shelter from th' inclement Air,  
 Because he first obtain'd a safe Retreat 625  
 Beneath this Roof, and hospitable Seat ?  
 Shall Man alone, by boasted Reason led,  
 Refuse to share with Man the social Bed,  
 When fiercer *Cyclops* live in mutual Peace,  
 And Fights between the stabled *Centaurs* cease. 630  
 E'n rav'ning Brutes defend the common Cause,  
 Nor deviate thus from Nature's sacred Laws.  
 But why this Flow of Words ? this fatal Morn  
 Shall see my bloody Spoils in Triumph borne,  
 Or shou'd my Breast with equal Vigour glow, 635  
 Nor my brisk Blood forget, as erst, to flow,  
 This Arm shall soon display my lineal Fire,  
 And prove me worthy my celestial Sire,  
 Nor shall the Want of martial Heat disgrace  
 (The *Theban* Prince replies) my godlike Race, 640  
 For conscious Pride forbad him yet to own  
 His wretched Sire, and claim the *Theban* Crown.  
 To them the King. — This causeless Strife surceas'd,  
 Advance, and with us share the solemn Feast.

v. 644. *Advance and with us*] *Evander* invites *Æneas* in like Manner. *Æneid*, B. 8. V. 172.

But first resign your Threats, and Rage of Blood 645  
 To mutual Love, and Cares of mutual Good;  
 And let your Hands, in sacred Union join'd,  
 Attest the fixt Intentions of the Mind.

For some mysterious Cause was this decreed,  
 Nor are the Gods, unconscious of the Deed. 650

Perhaps, when Length of Time has seal'd the Vow,  
 And your firm Hearts with holy Friendship glow,  
 With Joy you may review the bloody Fray,  
 Nor blush to trace this e'er auspicious Day.

Thus *Jove's* Decree, unconscious, he foreshows; 655  
 The Sequel far transcends his warmest Vows:

For *Pylades* was not more known to Fame,  
 Nor *Theseus*, burning with an equal Flame,  
 Tho' to redeem his bold Companion lost,  
 He brav'd the Dangers of the *Stygian* Coast. 660

At length, the Chiefs to Reason yield the Sway,  
 And the sage Dictates of the King obey:

An Air of mutual Friendship they assume,  
 And enter, Hand in Hand, the spacious Room.

Annua, quæ differre nefas, celebrate faventes  
 Nobiscum, & jam nunc sociorum affuescite mensis.

v. 657. *For Pylades*] The Friendship of *Pylades* and *Orestes* was so strong, that when *Orestes* was sent for to be put to Death, *Pylades* said he was *Orestes* to preserve his Friend, and *Orestes* (as the Truth was) avouched himself to be the Man, that his Friend might not for his sake lose his Life, whence their Names are made a Proverb, to signify unfeigned Friends.

v. 569. *Tho' to redeem*] The Companion of *Theseus* was *Piritheus*, who going to Hell in quest of *Proserpine*, whom he had vowed to enjoy, was slain by *Cerberus*. *Theseus*, missing his Comrade, and concluding where he was gone, repaired to the infernal Regions likewise, but was taken Prisoner by the same Monster, and detained in Chains, till *Hercules* came and delivered him.

BOOK I. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 29

Thus when the Ruler of the stormy Main 665  
 Is pleas'd the Tempest's Fury to restrain,  
 The Winds, abating, smoothe the Vessel's Course,  
 And on the black'ning Sails exhaust their Force.  
 Here first the Monarch, fix'd in deep Amaze,  
 The Dress and Arms of either Guest surveys. 670  
 A Lion's tawny Hide the Theban wore  
 (Such grac'd the godlike Hercules of Yore,  
 Ere Nemea's Boast resign'd his shaggy Spoils,  
 To deck his Shoulders, and reward his Toils)  
 Th' *Ætolian* Monster's Pride young Tydeus bears, 675  
 Horrid with Tusks, and rough with bristling Hairs.  
 The hoary Chief, astonish'd to behold  
 Th' Events, by Phæbus' Oracles foretold,  
 Acknowledges with Joy the Voice of Heav'n,  
 And Answers, from the vocal Cavern giv'n. 680  
 Then to the Skies he lifts his grateful Hands,  
 And thus the future Aid of Night demands,  
 (While thro' each Vein mysterious Transports roll,  
 And awful Pleasure thrills thro' all his Soul.)  
 O gloomy Queen of Shades, whose ebon Throne 685  
 The sparkling Gems of Heav'n in Order crown,  
 Beneath whose Reign indulgent Sleep repairs  
 The busy World, and buries mortal Cares,  
 Till rising Sol warms India's fragrant Soil,  
 And with his Rays renews our daily Toil; 690  
 Whose Aid alone cou'd free the doubtful Way,  
 And the dark Fates disclose to sudden Day;  
 O speed my Cause, nor let me still complain  
 Of lying Oracles, and Omens vain.  
 So shall our Sons renew these Rites divine 695  
 For Ages hence at this thy honour'd Shrine,

And while the Priests thy sacred Name invoke,  
 Black Sheep cull'd out, shall fall beneath their Stroke,  
 In curling Spires the sable Smoke shall rise,  
 And waft its grateful Odours to the Skies. 700  
 Hail, antient *Tripods*, and ye dark Abodes!  
 Exult we, Fortune, for th' acknowledg'd Gods,  
 Whose tutelary Pow'r with Joy I own,  
 And you, O long desired to heir my Throne.  
 He spoke, and with the Princes bent his Way 705  
 To th' inner Court, impatient of Delay,  
 Where yet thin Fumes a fainty Odour yield,  
 And mould'ring Embers dying Sparks conceal'd.  
 He then enjoins his Servants to repair  
 The Fire, and make the genial Feast their Care. 710  
 Swift at the Word they run: the Court replies  
 To ev'ry Voice, and ecchoes back their Cries.  
 With *Tyrian* Carpets this adorns the Ground,  
 That smoothes the Beds with Gold and Purple crown'd:  
 While some the Tables range, count ev'ry Guest, 715  
 And artfully adjust the future Feast;  
 Others with salted Entrails heap the Fire,  
 And bid the Flames from ev'ry Part aspire.  
 From gilded Roofs depending, Lamps display  
 Nocturnal Beams, and emulate the Day: 720  
 The Canisters are pil'd with *Ceres'* Spoils,  
 And the King views with Joy their Rival-Toils.  
 On Tapestry reclin'd, *Adrastus* shone  
 Afar conspicuous, from his Iv'ry Throne:  
 A broider'd Couch supports the foreign Guests, 725  
 Nor Love of Discord longer fires their Breasts.  
 The Monarch bids *Aceste* then appear,  
 And whispers his Injunctions in her Ear,

Whose bright Example had to Virtue train'd  
 His Daughters, and preserv'd their Fame unstain'd. 730  
 The Nymphs the Summons of their Sire attend,  
 And to the Hall their Steps obsequious bend:  
*Minerva's* Features, and *Diana's* Grace  
 Conspir'd to stamp Perfection on their Face.  
 But as in Prospect they perus'd the Feast, 735  
 And met the Glances of each unknown Guest,  
 In Blushes they reveal'd the first Surprize,  
 And to their Sire recall'd their wand'ring Eyes,  
 While gath'ring Shame their conscious Face o'erspread,  
 Varying their Cheeks by Turns with white and red. 740  
 But when the Rage of Hunger was repress'd,  
 The Meat remov'd, and satiate ev'ry Guest,  
 A Goblet in the midst *Adrastus* plac'd,  
 With sculptur'd Gold, and glitt'ring Figures grac'd,  
 In which his Ancestors were wont to pour 745  
 Libations, and indulge the genial Hour.  
 Here fraught with Gorgon's Spoils, the winged Horse  
 O'er Heav'n's Expanse was seen to stretch his Course,  
 While she her Eyes in dying Motions roll'd,  
 Her Paleness imag'd in th' impassion'd Gold. 750  
 There the commission'd Eagle seems to bear  
 The *Phrygian* Youth thro' Tracts of yielding Air.

v. 751. *There the commission'd*] *Virgil* relates the same Story, with similar Circumstances, as described in a Piece of Embroidery.

Intextusque puer frondosâ regius Idâ  
 Veloces jaculo cervos cursuque fatigat,  
 Acer, anhelanti similis; quem præpes ab Idâ  
 Sublimem pedibus rapuit *Jovis* armiger uncis.  
 Longævi palmas nequicquam ad sidera tendunt  
 Custodes, sævitque canum latratus ad auras.

*Æneid*, Book 5. V. 252.

Proud *Ida*'s Summit lessens to his Sight,  
 And *Troy* rolls back beneath his rising Flight;  
 While his sad Comrades on the crowded Coast 755  
 View both in Clouds of ambient Æther lost,  
 And each lov'd Hound, in deeper Notes of Woe,  
 Demands his Master of th'unheeding Foe.  
 This old *Adrastus* fills with sacred Wine,  
 And then in Pray'r invokes the Pow'rs divine: 760  
 But *Phæbus*, first of the celestial Train,  
 Receives the mystic Off'rings of the Fane;  
 Him with united Shouts the Crowd demands,  
 And waves the flow'ring Branches in their Hands;  
 For him this annual Sacrifice prepares, 765  
 While which incessant Flames each Altar glares.  
 Then thus the King.—Perhaps these Youths wou'd know,  
 What claims this strict Observance of our Vow;  
 And why the pious Sons of *Argos* pay  
 Such special Honours to the God of Day. 770  
 No superstitious Zeal our Sires impell'd  
 To constitute these Rites, which you've beheld.  
 But when and whence these solemn Customs rose,  
 (So ye but lend Attention,) I'll disclose.  
 When now the *Python* had by *Phæbus* bled, 775  
 And with his Bulk the *Delphic* Plain o'erspread,

v. 771. *No superstitious*] So *Evander* in the eighth Book of the *Æneid*, Verse 185.

— Non hæc solennia nobis

Has ex more dapes, hanc tanti numinis aram,  
 Vana superstitio, veterumque ignara Decorum  
 Imposuit.

v. 775. *When now the Python*] The *Python* was a huge Serpent, so called from Πυθων, to rot; because he was reported to arise from the Rottenness of the Earth after the Deluge. *Juno* sent him to vex *Latona*, who was then with Child by *Jupiter*: but the Goddess flying

(As hanging o'er the fair *Castalian* Flood)  
 He fills his turgid Maw with noxious Food.  
 To th' Argive Court repair'd the Victor-God,  
 And with his Presence honour'd our Abode. 780  
 The King *Crotopus* (as the Fates decreed)  
 Was blest with no Male-Issue to succeed:  
 A Nymph, unmatch'd in Manners as in Face,  
 Was the sole Product of his first Embrace:  
 Thrice happy Maid! had *Phæbus* fail'd to move 785  
 Her tender Breast, nor kindled mutual Love:  
 For by th' enamour'd God, compress'd, she bore  
 A godlike Son on *Nemea*'s winding Shore,  
 Ere the tenth Moon had with her borrow'd Light  
 Supply'd the Want of Day, and rul'd the Night. 790  
 For this constrain'd to quit her native Place,  
 And shun approaching Vengeance and Disgrace,  
 Among the rustic Swains she seeks a Friend,  
 To whom she might her precious Charge commend.  
 The wretched Babe, beneath an homely Shed 795  
 With bleating Lambkins shares a common Bed;  
 While with the Pipe his Foster-Father tries  
 To sooth his Complaints, and close his Infant-Eyes.

flying to *Asteria*, her Sister, was protected till *Apollo* grew up; who killed the Monster; for which the *Macedonians* instituted the *Pythian* Games.

v. 775. *When now*] This is a very fine Episode, and in my Opinion, superior to that of *Cæcus* in the eighth Book of the *Æneid*. When I say superior, I would not be understood to mean, that this of *Statius* is better executed: but that it abounds with a greater Variety of Matter, and consequently requires less Art of the Poet to render it compleat. The Description of *Psamathe* and her Child's unhappy Fate, and the patriotic Behaviour of *Choræbus* are Masterpieces in their Kind, and cannot fail of affording the Reader the highest Satisfaction. Give me Leave to add, that when the Subject is so circumstanced as in the present Case, though the Poets Art should be equal: yet that Episode, which contains the greatest Variety of Incidents, will always have the Preference. Google

Hard was his Lot. — Yet still relentless Fate  
 Forbad him to enjoy this poor Retreat: 800  
 For while abandon'd to blind Fortune's Care,  
 Beneath the Shade he breathes the Morning Air,  
 The furious Dogs his tender Carcase tore,  
 And fed luxurious on the recent Gore.  
 But when the Tidings reach'd the Mother's Ears, 805  
 Unmindful of her former Shame and Fears,  
 She raves, the Palace fills with piercing Cries,  
 Nor shuns her Father's once-avoided Eyes:  
 Then hears, impatient of her vital Breath,  
 The fatal Sentence, and demands her Death. 810  
 But *Phabus*, mindful of his stol'n Embrace,  
 Prepares t' avenge her Sufferings and Disgrace,  
 And bids ascend, to plague the guilty Earth,  
 A horrid Monster of infernal Birth:  
 Her Face and Breast a female Form disclose, 815  
 But from her Head a crested Serpent rose,  
 Whose hideous Length disparts her livid Brows,  
 And from afar with dreadful Splendour glows,  
 When fav'ring Night the busy World o'erspreads,  
 She roams the Streets, or haunts the Childrens Beds, 820  
 Consigns to *Pluto*, and a sudden Night  
 Those new-born Babes, who scarce had seen the Light,  
 And, unresisted by the heartless Foe,  
 Thrives, and collects fresh Strength from public Woe.  
 With Grief *Chorabus* ey'd the wasteful Pest, 825  
 And gen'rous Rage inflam'd his Patriot Breast;  
 To some few chosen Youths, who Life disclaim;  
 And think it overfold to purchase Fame,

v. 827. *Who Life disclaim*] This Expression is made use of by *Virgil*.



He pleads his Country's Cause, and undismay'd  
Extorts a Promise of united Aid. 830

These soon descri'd her, fir'd with vengeful Hate,  
Where the broad Path, divided, fronts the Gate;  
Two Infants, borne from some unguarded Dome,  
Hang at her Side, unconscious, what's to come,  
Till her sharp Claws explore their inner Parts, 835  
And seek the nearest Passage to their Hearts.

So sad a Sight *Chorabus* could not bear,  
But buried in her Breast his rushing Spear.  
The Springs of Life emit their crimson Store,  
And thro' the Gap, discharg'd in issuing Gore, 840  
Her Soul revisits the *Tartarian* Coast,  
And native *Styx*, — a lonely, dreaded Ghost.

Eager they press to view the Monster's Eyes  
Livid in Death, her Womb's enormous Size,  
And Breasts more filthy with the clotted Blood. 845  
Of *Grecian* Babes. — The Youths of *Argos* stood

In Wonder lost; and to their recent Tears  
Great Joys succeed, but Joys appall'd with Fears.  
Their sole Vexation now remains to find  
Their Rage exhausted, their Revenge confin'd. 850

Some seem displeas'd, they can no longer kill,  
And wish their Pow'r was equal to their Will:  
Whilst others mangling her detested Corse  
With furious Zeal her Limbs asunder force.

Est hic est animus lucis contemptor, et istum,  
Qui vitâ bene credat eni, quod tendis, honorem.

*Æneid*, V. 206, B. 9.

And by *Tasso* with little Variation.

Ho core anch' io, che morte sprezzâ, e crede  
Che ben si cambi con l'onor la vita.

*Giurâs*, Lib. Canto 12. Stanza 8.

To distant Rocks the Birds of Night repair, 855  
And shriek, impatient of the scented Air:

E'en hungry Dogs, and Monsters of the Wood  
Start from the Sight, and loath the direful Food.

This but increas'd *Apollo's* former Hate,  
And urg'd him to revenge the Monster's Fate. 860

From cleft *Parnassus'* Heights He bent his Bow,  
And hurl'd his Vengeance on the Realms below.

Around the God unnumber'd Mischiefs wait,  
And ev'ry Shaft contains resistless Fate.

While o'er th' Horizon gath'ring Clouds arise, 865  
Fraught with Destruction, and infect the Skies.

Death cuts the fatal Sisters' Threads in Haste,  
And the dispeopled City soon lays waste.

But *Phæbus* ask'd, from what mysterious Source  
*Sirius* deriv'd such unresisted Force, 870

Demands those Youths, whose Hands in Dust had laid  
The Monster's Pride, to glut her vengeful Shade.

Thrice happy Warrior! may thy Worth be crown'd  
With Famé, nor Length of Time thy Glory bound;

Who, nobly lavish of thy vital Breath, 875  
Disdain'st to shun inevitable Death:

v. 859 *This but increas'd*] It will not perhaps be displeasing to the Reader; if I subjoin the following Passage from *Homer*, to give him an Opportunity of comparing it with what he has just read.

ὦς ἔρατ' ἐυχόμενος τῷ δ' ἔκλυε φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων.

Βῆ δὲ κατ' Οὐλύμπιοι καρήνων χρομένον κῆρ,

Τόξ' ὅμοισιν ἔχων, ἀμφοτεροῖα τε φασίτην.

Ἐκλαυξάν δ' ἄρ' οἷοι ἐκ ἄμμου χρομένιοι,

Αὐτὲ κινδύνισον. ὃ δ' ἦν τυκτὶ τοικῶς.

Ἐξίτ' ἔπειτ' ἀπάνωδε νῆων, μετὰ δ' ἰὸν ἔκει.

Δεινὰ δὲ κλαυγὴ γένειτ' ἀργυρίοιο βιοῖο.

Οὐρῆας μὲν πῶτον ἐπ' ἰάχετο, καὶ κύνας δ' ἐγγύς.

Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' αὐτοῖσι βέλο' ἐχέπινκ' ἀφροῖς,

Βαῖα' αἰεὶ δὲ πυρὰν νέον καίοντο θαμνίαν. *Iliad*, L. I. V. 43.

And, rushing to the Temple, durst provoke  
 The raging God, and thus demand the Stroke.  
 Think not Desire of Life, or public Force  
 Hath to thy Fane, O *Phœbus*, urg'd my Course: 880  
 With conscious Virtue arm'd, thy Will I wait,  
 To save my Country, and avert its Fate.  
 Behold the Man, who durst in Fight engage  
 His Country's Pest, and bound its wasteful Rage:  
 Whom to revenge, the Sun withheld its Light, 885  
 And wrapt the Skies in pestilential Night.  
 But if such horrid Scenes thy Thoughts employ,  
 And Death and Slaughter are thy savage Joy;  
 If Man no more must thy Protection claim,  
 Since the Fiend's Death has fann'd thy vengeful Flame.  
 Yet why shou'd *Argos* for my Crimes atone,  
 And share the Vengeance due to me alone?  
 Let me be deem'd the hateful Cause of all,  
 And suffer, rather than my Country fall;  
 Unless you view with Joy our desert Town, 895  
 And fun'ral Flames, unrivall'd by your own.  
 But why do I the fatal Dart arrest,  
 And torture with Suspense each Matron's Breast?  
 Then fit the Arrow to the well-strung Bow,  
 And send me glorying to the Shades below. 900

v. 891. *Yet why should Argos*] *Tasso* has put the same noble Sentiment in the Mouth of *Sophonra*, but with an additional Beauty of Expression.

— E giusto, esser à mi conviene  
 Se fui sola al' onor, sola alle pene.

And a little lower.

A me l' Onor, la morte à me si deve,  
 Non s' usurpi costei le pene mie.

*Gerusalem, Lib. Canto 2.*

Digitized by Google But,

But, ere the Fates suppress my vital Breath,  
 Grant me to see (some Solace in my Death)  
 The Plague in unoffending *Argas* cease,  
 And exil'd Health restor'd again to *Greece*.  
 Fortune consigns the Coward to the Grave, 905  
 But for his Country's Sake preserves the Brave.  
 Relenting *Phæbus* quits his angry Bow,  
 And blushing longer to remain a Foe,  
 With Rev'rence bids th' unwilling Patriot live,  
 And Health and Peace in sorrowing *Greece* revive. 910  
 From that auspicious Day with Rites divine,  
 We worship at *Apollo's* honour'd Shrine:  
 Such annual Feasts his temp'rate Rays require,  
 And thus we shun the God's returning Ire.  
 But say, illustrious Youth, from whence you came, 915  
 From whence derive your Birth, and what's your Claim?  
 Since the brave Son of *Oeneus* stands confess'd,  
 A welcome Neighbour, and more welcome Guest,  
 And the full Bowl, and silent Hours invite  
 With various Converse to contract the Night. 920  
 A rising Blush o'erspreads the *Theban* Chief,  
 Yet glowing with the Prospect of Relief,  
 Prone to the Earth he fix'd his gloomy Eyes,  
 And with a previous Sigh at length replies.  
 Before these Altars how shall I reveal, 925  
 What conscious Shame enjoins me to conceal?  
 Too happy! was my Fortune not more known  
 To Fame than you, or known to you alone.  
 But since you take such Int'rest in my Woe,  
 And the disastrous Tale desire to know, 930  
 Learn, that from *Cadmus* by Descent I come,  
*Jocasta's* Son, and *Thebes* my native Home.

*Adrastus*, touch'd with his unhappy Fate,  
 Replies. — Forbear the Sequel to relate :  
 Nor think us Strangers to the *Theban* Name, 935  
 Or deaf to the divulging Voice of Fame.  
 E'en those who freeze beneath the Northern Pole,  
 Or view the swelling Waves of *Ganges* roll,  
 Who live, where Ocean bounds th' *Hesperian* Lands,  
 Or dread the Depth of *Lybia's* burning Sands: 940  
 All these have known the Fury's vengeful Ire,  
 And the rash Actions of your wretched Sire.  
 But if the Son re-acts the Father's Crimes,  
 And shares the lineal Guilt of former Times,  
 How curst am I, on whose unhappy Race 945  
 The Feast of *Tantalus* entail'd Disgrace!  
 Be this thy Study then, with inbred Worth  
 To efface the Stains coeval with thy Birth.  
 But see pale *Cynthia* quits th' ethereal Plains,  
 And of Night's Empire but a third remains; 950  
 With Wine then let the sprinkled Altars blaze,  
 And joyful *Pæans* swell the Note of Praise.  
 O *Phæbus*, Author of the rising Day,  
 Whether thy *Lycian* Mountains court thy Stay,  
 Or fair *Castalia's* Current claims thy Care, 955  
 Where oft thou joy'st to bathe thy golden Hair :  
 Whether proud *Troy* detains thee on her Strands,  
 Rear'd by the Labour of celestial Hands;  
 Or, pleas'd to seek thy native Isle no more,  
 Thy genial Presence gilds the *Cynthian* Shore; 960  
 Whose graceful Hand supports the fatal Bow,  
 And darts Destruction on the furious Foe.

v. 957. *Whether proud Troy*] *Troy* was built by the joint Labour of  
*Neptune* and *Apollo* : Hence *Horace* says,

Ter si refurgat murus abœneus

Auctore *Phæbo* &c.

Lib. 3. Ode 3. Google Or,

In vain old Age assaults thy beardless Face,  
 Crown'd with fresh Beauty, and perennial Grace.  
 'Tis thine to warn us with unerring Skill 965  
 Of Heav'n's Decrees, and *Jove's* resistless Will;  
 To teach, from whence the Torch of Discord springs,  
 The Change of Sceptres, and the Fate of Kings.  
 Thy Shafts allay'd fierce *Tityos'* lawless Lust,  
 And humbled haughty *Marfyas* to the Dust, 970  
 (Who durst aspire to match thy sacred Lays)  
 And from the *Pythou* reap'd immortal Praise:  
 Thy Pow'r transform'd proud *Niobe* to Stone,  
 And to *Latona's* Charms adjudg'd the Crown:  
*Megara*, fiercest Fiend, at thy Command 975  
 For e'er incumbent, shakes her vengeful Brand  
 O'er the devoted Head of the rash Sire,  
 Who wrapt the *Delphic* Fane in impious Fire,  
 He views the proffer'd Food, yet dares not taste,  
 And dreads the cavern'd Rock above him plac'd. 980  
 Let then our Fields thy constant Influence share,  
 And *Argos*, sacred to the Queen of Air;  
 Whether the Name of *Titan* please thee most,  
 A Name rever'd on th *Achaemenian* Coast,  
 Or great *Osiris*, whom the *Pharian* Swain 985  
 Decks with the First-Fruits of the ripen'd Grain:  
 Or *Mitra* more, to whose prolific Rays  
 The grateful *Persian* Adoration pays,  
 Who grasps the Horns of the reluctant Steer,  
 While on his Head encircling Lights appear. 990

v. 987. Or *Mitra* more] The *Persians* call the Sun *Mitra*, account him the greatest of their Gods, and worship him in a Cave. His Statue has the Head of a Lion, on which a Turbant, called *Tiara*, is placed. It is clothed with *Persian* Attire. and holds with both Hands a struggling Heifer,

T H E

THEBAID OF STATIUS.

B O O K T H E S E C O N D.

# THE ARGUMENT.

**T***HIS Book opens with a Description of Mercury's Return from Hell, pursuant to the Commands of Jove, as delivered in the first Book. Laius appears to Eteocles, and to make the greater Impression upon his Mind, assumes the Form of Tiresias. The Theban King persists in withholding the Crown from his Brother. The Poet then transports us to Argos, and relates the Marriage of the two Heroes to Adrastus's Daughters, by which a triple Alliance is formed between Adrastus, Tydeus and Polynices. The Nuptials are interrupted by an inauspicious Omen; the Cause of which is attributed to Argia's wearing the Necklace of Harmonia. Tydeus is deputed Ambassador to claim the Crown of Eteocles; but meeting with a Repulse, denounces War against him. The Tyrant hires fifty Ruffians to assassinate him in his Way to Argos. These are slain all but one, whom he spares to carry the News to Thebes. The Hero flushed with his Success, would have ventured himself among his Enemies there, but Minerva interposes; to whom he raises a Trophy of the Spoils, and prefers a Prayer, which concludes the Book.*



## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE SECOND.

**N**OW *Hermes*, fraught with the Commands of *Jove*,  
 With Wings expanded seeks the Realms above.  
 Black Mists surround him, and impervious Night  
 Checks his bold Progress, and controuls his Flight ;  
 No Zephyrs waft him o'er the Realms below, 5  
 But still and noisome Gales — on one Side flow  
 The branching Streams of *Styx* in calm Repose,  
 On t'other fiery Lakes his Way oppose.

Prop'd on the Wand divine, old *Laïus*' Shade  
 Stalks flow behind him ; for the forceful Blade 10  
 Thro' his pierc'd Ribs an easy Passage found,  
 Till Point and Hilt had clos'd the gaping Wound.  
 Amaz'd the dreary Grove and pensive Glades  
 Survey his Passage from th' infernal Shades,  
 While flitting Spectres eye the King's Return 15  
 With sullen Grief, and their Confinement mourn :  
 For, like the Soul, pale Envy braves the Tomb,  
 Nor with the Body shares an equal Doom.

Verse 1. *Now Hermes*] The Beginning of this Book is really valuable, as it throws considerable Light on the Heathen Mythology, and the Notions they entertained of a future State.

v. *For like the Soul*] This Opinion of the Passions inhering after Death in the Souls of Men is confirmed by *Virgil*.

But one, who sickens at another's Joy,  
 Prone to insult, and eager to destroy, 20  
 With borrow'd Smile old *Laius* thus address'd,  
 While rankling Malice swell'd his envious Breast.  
 Thrice happy Shade! (whether propitious *Jove*  
 Enjoins thy Presence in the Realms above,  
 Or madd'ning Fury, or prophetic Maid 25  
 Forbids thy Stay in this detested Shade)  
 Could'st thou enjoy the Sun's enliv'ning Beam,  
 The flow'ry Mead, clear Skies, and chrystal Stream,  
 But soon alas! more forrowing thou'l't return,  
 And with retorted Eye those Pleasures mourn. 30  
 He paus'd : for *Cerberus* began to rear  
 His angry Snakes, and arm'd his bristling Hair;

Quæ gratia currum,  
 Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes  
 Pâscere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repositos.

Æn. Lib. 6. Ver. 653.

v. 19. *But one who sickens*]

Sed videt ingratos, intabescitque videndo  
 Successus hominum. —

*Ovid's Metam. Lib. 2.*

It appears from this Passage of *Statius*, that the Souls of the deceased were not so thoroughly weaned from the Pleasures of the World, as to be averse to a Return; but the most probable Conjecture we can form is, that they had not undergone the Purgation mentioned by *Virgil*.

Ergo exercentur pænis, veterumque malorum  
 Supplicia expendunt. —

Æn. Lib. 6. V. 739.

v. 31. *He paus'd*]

*Cerberus* hæc ingens latratu regna trifauci  
 Personat, adverso recubans immunis in antro.  
 Cui vates, horrere videns jam colla colubris,  
 Melle soporatam, et medicatis frugibus offam  
 Objicit, ille fame rabidâ tria guttura pandens,  
 Corripit objectam, atque immania terga resolvit  
 Fufus humi, totoque ingens extenditur antro.

*Virg. Æn. B. V. 417.*

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Sternly

BOOK II. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 45

Sternly he yawn'd: th' advancing Ghosts retire,  
 Nor dare withstand the Monster's threat'ned Ire.  
 But *Hermes* with his Wand *Lethean* clos'd 35  
 His watchful Eyes, and a short Truce impos'd.  
 A Steep there is, fam'd *Tanaros* by Name,  
 Whose equal Summit joins the starry Frame.  
 Calm from its Height it hears the Tempest blow,  
 And views, secure, the breaking Surge below. 40  
 Here hoarse Winds, lull'd in gentle Slumbers, lie,  
 And hurl'd from hence, the red-wing'd Lightnings fly.  
 Collected Mists its flinty Sides surround,  
 Nor hears its Head the distant Thunder's Sound.  
 But when the Day declines, its length'ning Steep 45  
 O'erhangs the Waves, and shades the middle Deep.  
 The crooked Shore too forms an inner Bay,  
 Where inoffensively the Billows play.  
 The Steeds of *Neptune* here securely feed,  
 Of Fish and Courser a promiscuous Breed. 50  
 This winding Path (*Arcadia's* Sons report)  
 Conveys the damn'd to *Pluto's* gloomy Court.  
 Here oft are heard deep Groans, tumultuous Cries,  
 And loud Laments, that rend the vaulted Skies;  
 Grim *Cerb'rus* howls; the Furies drag their Chains, 55  
 And the scar'd Hinds retreat to distant Plains.  
 This Way, involv'd in Shades of sable Night,  
 Great *Hermes* takes, and steers to Heav'n his Flight.  
 He shakes the Mists infernal from his Face,  
 And the fresh Air renews his ev'ry Grace. 60  
 Then thro' the Regions of the frozen North  
 He sails with steady Wings. — Sleep, fallying forth  
 In Night's dim Car, extends o'er all his Sway:  
 Both met, but Sleep resign'd the shining Way.

46 STATIUS: THEBAID. Book II.

Beneath the God the Phantom flits, describes 65  
 His native Country, and long-ravish'd Skies,  
 And now surveys aspiring *Cyrrha*'s Brow,  
 And the stain'd Fields of *Phocis* far below.  
 But as he glanc'd, where his own Palace stood,  
 And Chariot still discolour'd with his Blood, 70  
 He deeply groan'd : recoiling Nature strove  
 With Duty, and disputes the Will of *Jove*.  
 In vain *Cyllenius* waves his iv'ry Wand,  
 He halts, regardless of the God's Command.  
 T'was the Decline of that revolving Ray, 75  
 Which first gave *Bacchus* to the Realms of Day,  
 When joyous Revels chase the drousy Night,  
 Nor cease, till *Sol* restores his absent Light.  
 With Glee the *Thebans* (Part in open Field,  
 And Part at Home) their sparkling Goblets wield. 80  
 Between each Draught the Pipes, the Cymbals found,  
 And Music's soft Delights the Banquet crown'd.  
 From glad *Cithæron* too the Matrons throng,  
 Inspir'd by milder *Bacchus*, rush along.  
 The *Thracians* thus on *Offa*'s Pine-crown'd Height, 85  
 Or *Rhodope* indulge the festive Rite ;  
 In Luxury they snatch the Lion's Food,  
 And with new Milk correct the Draught of Blood :  
 But if the Strength of Wine excite their Rage,  
 Cups clash with Cups, and Stones with Stones engage,  
 Nor ends the Conflict, till from many a Wound  
 Black Streams of social Gore distain the Ground.

v. 85. *The Thracians thus*] This Accounts of the *Thracians* is confirmed by the concurring Testimony of several Historians, and particularly by that of *Herodotus*.

Such was the Night, when with descending Wing  
 Fam'd *Maia's* Offspring reach'd the *Theban* King.  
 Stretch'd on embroider'd Tapestry he lay, 95  
 And sought in Sleep to doze his Cares away,  
 Ill-fated Race, whom Fate forbids to know  
 Their destin'd Woes, till she discharge the Blow.  
 Then th' aged King with fix'd and steady Mind  
 Prepares to execute what *Jove* injoin'd, 100  
 And lest he should an airy Phantom seem,  
 Or griesly Child of some terrific Dream,  
 Assumes the Form of the *Bæstian* Sage,  
 Alike in Voice, in Feature, and in Age.  
 A Length of hoary Beard he still retains, 105  
 And the same Paleness o'er his Visage reigns.  
 But a false Mire bound his awful Brow,  
 And in his Hand he bore an Olive-Bough,  
 On which were Fillets wound.—The Prince's Breast  
 With this he gently smote, and thus address'd. 110  
 Thus sleep you, careless of the glorious Strife.  
 As tho' secure of Empire and of Life ;

v. 106. *What Jove enjoin'd*] *Jupiter's* Artifice to punish the *Thebans* will not appear unjust, if we consider, that the incestuous Race of *Oedipus* were themselves impious and were therefore justly doomed to Destruction : and *Quæ Jupiter vult perdere, demeritat prius.*

v. 133. *Assumes the Form of the Bæotian Sage*] Mr. *Warton* has been perhaps a little too severe in his strictures on this Passage, in his Note on Verse 525 of the seventh Book of *Virgil's Æneid*. *Statius* (says he) but with little Success upon the whole, has imitated this Passage, where the Shade of *Laius* disguised under the Figure of *Tiresias* appears to *Eteocles* asleep.

v. 111. *Thus sleep you*] Our Author seems to have copied this Speech from *Homer's Iliad*, Book 2. Verse 60.

Εὐδαίμων Ἀτρεΐδης καὶ δειφροσύνῃ παρθένῳ  
 Οὐ καὶ παῖνός γε εὐδαίμων βελήφορος ἄνθρωπος

ἦ λάλῃ

# 48 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book II.

Thus unambitious of the Wreaths, which Fame  
 Has woven, and thy better Deeds should claim?  
 Less Guilt attends the skilful Pilot's Sleep, 115  
 When gath'ring Storms o'erhang the troubled Deep,  
 The Helm unmanag'd, and the Ship resign'd  
 To sportive Fortune, and th' inconstant Wind.  
 Mean while the Heir of old *Adrastus*' Crown  
 Already deems your Diadem his own, 120  
 Supports by Marriage his declining Cause,  
 And bloody *Tydeus* to his Standard draws.  
 Hence springs his Pride, his Hopes of Vengeance flow,  
 And a long Exile to his Brother-Foe.  
 By *Gove* commission'd, from the Skies above 125  
 I bear this Proof of his paternal Love.  
 Then keep the Crown, and know, shou'dst thou resign,  
 His Soul is daring at the least as thine :  
 Lest thro' Delays you mourn your Empire lost,  
 And the fierce *Argives* ravaging your Coast. 130  
 The Phantom paus'd, (for now a bursting Ray  
 Of Light proclaim'd the glad Approach of Day)  
 Then pluck'd the borrow'd Honours from his Brow,  
 And from his Hand dismiss'd the peaceful Bough.  
 At length he bares his blood-impurpled Breast,  
 And all the murder'd Grandfire stands confest. 135

ὦ λαοί τ' ἐπιτετραφένται, καὶ τόσσα μέμνη  
 Νῦν δ' ἐμείθεν ζῶντες ἄκα Διὸς δὲ τοι ἄγγελός τιμι  
 Ὅς σου αὐτὸν ἰόν, μέγα.

v. 131. *The Phantom paus'd*] *Anchises*, when he is introduced appearing to his Son *Aeneas*, concludes his Speech to him in the following Lines.

Jamque vale : torquet medios nox humida curfus,  
 Et me sævus equis oriens afflavit anhelis.

*Virgil's Æneid, Book 5. Verse 738.*

*Eteocles* now feels the streaming Wound,  
 And full of Horror, rousls his Eyes around;  
 Effays to shun the Spectre's hated Sight,  
 And dares his absent Brother to the Fight. 140  
 Thus when a sleeping Tiger from afar  
 Hears the shrill Preludes of approaching War,  
 He starts, calls forth his Spots, expands his Jaws,  
 Wakes to the promis'd Fight, and points his Claws;  
 Then bounding thro' the Thickets of the Wood, 145  
 Bears to his bloody Whelps the reeking Food.

*Aurora* now from *Titbon's* Saffron Bed  
 With dawning Streaks of Light the Skies o'erspread;  
 She shook the sparkling Dew-drops from her Hair,  
 And blush'd to find the peeping Sun so near: 150  
 While breaking thro' the Clouds, the Morning Star,  
 Advancing, tow'rd's her guides his rosy Car,  
 Nor e'er withdraws, till *Sol's* superior Ray  
 Flames in the Front of Heav'n, and gives the Day.

v. 141. *Thus when a sleeping Tiger*] The Grandeur and Propriety of this Simile are too obvious to be insisted upon; and were I to enlarge on it, and point out the Sublimity of the Expressions, the Harmony of Numbers, the beautiful Connection of Circumstances, and exact Propriety of the whole, I should anticipate the Reader's Judgment. The greatest Proof of what I advance is Mr. Cowley's Imitation. He saw its Beauties, and endeavoured to copy them. How well he has executed it, is left to the judicious Reader to determine.

So when a *Scythian* Tiger gazing round,  
 A Herd of Kine in some fair Plain has found,  
 Lowing secure; he swells with angry Pride,  
 And calls forth all his Spots on ev'ry Side.  
 Then stops, and hurls his haughty Eyes on all  
 In Choice of some strong Neck, on which to fall;  
 Almost he scorns so weak, so cheap a Prey,  
 And grieves to see them trembling haste away. David.

D

Now

Now springing from his Bed, *Adrastus* rose, 155  
 Nor long behind the Sweets of wish'd Repose  
 Detain'd his Guests.—For Sleep had now bedew'd  
 Their weary Limbs, and all their Strength renew'd.  
 But anxious Cares *Adrastus* had oppress'd ;  
 Sleep fled his Eyes, and Peace forsook his Breast. 160  
 Musing he calls to Mind the Fate's Decree,  
 And his new Guests connected Destiny.  
 In a sequester'd Room conven'd they sate  
 For Bus'ness calculated and Debate.  
 Each wou'd begin, but Fears and Doubts restrain: 165  
 At length the Monarch rose, and eas'd their Pain.  
 Illustrious Youths, of Heav'n the constant Care,  
 Whom Storms of Thunder and inclement Air  
 Have drove beneath my Roof, by Fate's Decree  
 To fix the Base of mutual Amity 170  
 Why should I dwell on what's already known  
 By vulgar Fame thro' every *Grecian* Town ?  
 How many Youths have strove (tho' strove in vain)  
 By high Desert my Daughter's Love to gain.  
 But (if a Parent little Credit claim) 175  
 Yourselfs, the Objects of their decent Shame,  
 Saw o'er their Cheeks the glowing Blush arise,  
 When first your manly Features met their Eyes.  
 Did Wealth or Sway alone employ their Care,  
 They need not of acquiring them despair : 180  
 Since many a potent King of high Renown  
 Has wish'd them Partners of th'imperial Throne.  
 In this they might with *Dejanira* vie,  
 Or fam'd *Oenomaus*' boasted Progeny.

But



But Fate forbids they shou'd the Bed adorn 185  
 Of one in *Elis*, or in *Sparta* born,  
 To you, brave Youths, decrees the beauteous Pair,  
 And of their dotal Wealth an equal Share.  
 The God's Description tallies with your own,  
 And *Phabus*' Choise agrees in you alone. 190  
 Their Virgin-Smiles, I ween, shall well repay  
 The stormy Night; and Labours of the Fray.  
 The Princes on each other cast an Eye,  
 Expecting each his Comrade would reply,  
 Till bolder *Tydeus* to the Monarch bow'd 195  
 And thus discharg'd the Debt his Duty ow'd.  
 Much you enjoy of Fortune and of Fame,  
 Much more your gallant Deeds and Merit claim.  
 Of equalling your Worth the best despair,  
 Which adds a Jewel to the Crown you wear. 200  
 Fierce *Argos*, taught by Clemency t'obey,  
 Relinquish to you the Reins, and owns your Sway,  
 And wou'd propitious *Jove* consign you more,  
 And stretch your Pow'r to *Doria's* double Shore,  
*Phabus* no more shou'd fly *Mycenæ's* Plain, 205  
 Nor of their King *Elean* Vales complain :

v. 185. *But Fate forbids they shou'd*] *Adrastus* seems to have lain under the same Restraints as *Latinus*.

*Me natam nulli veterum sociare Procorum  
 Fas erat, idque omnes divique, hominesque caneant.*

And again,

*Est mihi nata, viro gentis quam jungere nostræ,  
 Non patrio ex adyto fortes ; non plurima cælo  
 Monstra ferunt.*

v. 197. *Much you enjoy*] I question, whether upon due Consideration, there will not be found too much of the Orator in *Tydeus*, who, according to our Author's own Words, was *Rudis fandi*.

v. 205. *Phæbus no more shou'd fly*] As at the Feast of *Thyestes*.  
 See *Ovid's Metamorphosis*.

Nor do the Furies only vex our State,  
 As thou, young Warrior, better can'st relate;  
 But I, a voluntary Exile, roam,  
 Nor forc'd by Rage fraternal, fly from Home. 210  
 He spoke, and thus subjoin'd the *Theban* Chief:  
 Tho' damp'd with Sorrows, and o'ercome with Grief,  
 My Soul averse to *Venus*' mystic Rites,  
 On other Objects wastes the sleepless Nights;  
 Yet this Alliance shou'd I now refuse, 215  
 Fancy wou'd flag, nor furnish an Excuse.  
 Such balmy Hope allays my troubled Breast,  
 And lulls the Passions of my Soul to rest,  
 As swells the little Bark on Ocean tost,  
 When near at Hand she spies some friendly Coast.  
 From hence alike the Turns of Chance we'll share,  
 And make each other's Bliss our only Care.  
 No Fate my vow'd Affection shall divide,  
 By Marriage as by Gratitude ally'd.  
 The Princes rose, while old *Adrastus* strove 225  
 By Strength of Language to declare his Love,  
 And vows, shou'd Fate his just Emprizes crown,  
 His Arms shou'd soon replace them on the Throne.  
 Mean while the Natives, ere a vague Report  
 Had scarce been wafted from the regal Court, 230  
 With loud Acclaim receive the King's Degree,  
 And give full Reins to Mirth and Revelry,  
 From hence Fame flies with unresisted Force,  
 Nor Hills, or Vales retard her airy Course:  
 And now, a tedious Length of Country past, 235  
 On *Cadmus*' Walls she fix'd herself at last.  
 She scares the wre ched King, and brings to Light  
 The mystic Visions of the former Night;

O'erwhelms his Hopes, augments his growing Fears,  
 And whispers Wars and Slaughter in his Ears. 240  
 Soon as the wish'd for Dawn appears, to Court  
 The Sons of *Argos* in huge Swarms resort,  
 Where form'd in Brass their great Forefathers stand,  
 And Art (so skilful was th' Engraver's Hand)  
 With Nature vies.— Here first you might discern 245  
 Old *Inachus*, reclining on his Urn.  
 Near him *Iafus* bends with feeble Age,  
 And old *Acrifus* vents on *Jove* his Rage.  
*Phorheus*, peaceful Chief, was next survey'd,  
 And stern *Chorabus*, bearing on his Blade 250  
 A bloody Head. — In Arms great *Abas* shines,  
 And *Danaus* his future Guilt designs.  
 The Leaders first the slow Procession wait,  
 While the loud Rabble thunders at the Gate ;  
 The Nobles next advance, a num'rous Line, 255  
 And in the Front, by Rank distinguish'd, shine.  
 The inner Court with Fire odorous glows,  
 While on all Sides the female Tumult grows.  
 A Throng of Matrons round each Bride appear,  
 Inspire with Hope, and sooth each Virgin-Fear. 260  
 And now with glowing Cheeks and downcast Eyes  
 The Princesses attend the Sacrifice,  
 Known by their Dignity of Dress and Face :  
 The flushing Purple heightens ev'ry Grace.  
 With Pain their anxious Feelings they suppress'd, 265  
 Some small Regret still linger'd in their Breast,  
 And Strugglings to retain their Virgin-State :  
 While the chaste Doubts of Innocence create  
 New Blushes, that improve their nat'ral Hue,  
 And artless Tears their lovely Cheeks bedew. 270

Decent Confusion! — At the moving Sight  
 Their tender Parents melt in soft Delight.  
 Thus shou'd *Diana*, and th' *Athenian* Maid  
 Descend from Heav'n in all their Pomp array'd;  
 Each in her Hands her wanted Weapons bears, 275  
 And the same Sternness in their Looks appears.  
 Shou'd *Cynthia* for a Casque her Quiver change,  
 And *Pallas* thro' the Lawns and Forests range;  
 The Change in either wou'd so well agree,  
 That safely none the Preference cou'd decree. 280.  
 The Quiver wou'd *Minerva's* Shoulders grace;  
 And the plum'd Helmet suit fair *Deia's* Face.  
 Mean while the joyful *Argives* seem to vie  
 In public Proofs of Zeal and Loyalty.  
 These waft to *Jove* in od'rous Flames a Pray'r, 285  
 And call for Blessings on the royal Pair;  
 With slaughter'd Victims' Entrails those appease  
 The Gods; nor will *Sabean* Smoke displease,  
 If a pure Heart direct the pious Vows,  
 And the strong Gate is deckt with flow'ring Boughs. 290  
 But lo! sad Omens from the Gods descend,  
 And *Jove's* and Heav'n's impending Rage portend;  
 A sadd'ning Horror ev'ry Face o'er spreads,  
 And on their Joys a solemn Dullness sheds.  
 T'was when great *Hymen's* sacred Rites to crown, 295  
 They bent their Course to fam'd *Larissa's* Town,

v. 288. *Mr. will Sabean.*] Our Author is of *Probus's* Opinion, whose noble Lines on this Subject breath more the Spirit of Christianity than Heathenism.

Compositum jus, fasque animi, sanctosque recessus  
 Mentis, et incoctam generoso pectus honesto  
 Hoc cedo, ut admoveam templis et farra litabo. *Satyr. 2.*

Than

Than which *Munichia's* Hill, nor *Athens' Grove*  
 Can boast superior Proofs of *Pallas' Love*.  
 Here (so long Custom had ordain'd) are led  
 The Nymphs, when ripen'd for the Marriage bed, 300  
 And for the Frailty of the Sex atone  
 With Maiden Ringlets on the Altars thrown.  
 Ere they had scal'd the Turret's gradual Height,  
 The Beam dismiss'd the Buckler's sacred Weight.  
 With horrid Clangor shook the plaintive Ground, 305  
 The Tapers crush'd, and Darkness shed around.  
 Then, ere they durst proceed, as from the Shrine  
 A Trumpet loud proclaim'd the Wrath divine.  
 First on the King they wildly turn their Eyes;  
 Then, question'd, each the well-heard Sound denies. 310  
 Yet all, all feel the dreadful Sign of Woe,  
 And their first Fears by various Converse grow.  
 Nor wond'rous was it, for *Argia* bore  
 The Bracelet, which *Harmonia* whilom wore.  
 O Goddess! say from what mysterious Source 315  
 The fatal Gift deriv'd such noxious Force?  
 Fame tells, that *Vulcan* wrought it, when he strove  
 To check the *Thracian* God's adul'rous Love,  
 (For useless lay the now-neglected Chain;  
 Threats fail'd, and Punishments were schem'd in vain)

v. 314. *The Bracelet.*] *Harmonia* was the Daughter of *Mars* and *Venus*. She married *Cadmus*, and was metamorphosed together with him into a Serpent.

v. 319. *For useless lay the*] The Poet alludes to the famous Chain, which *Vulcan* made to entrap his adulterous Consort in: for a farther Account of which see *Homer's Odyssey*, and *Ovid's Metamorphosis*. Lib. 4. Fab. 5.

This Digression seems very material and necessary, since it is founded on the Story, where the infectious Bracelet is represented as of great Importance, and it is also connected with the foregoing

# 56 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK II.

With many a Gem t'was fraught and precious Stone,  
To deck the Partner of the *Theban* Throne.  
Long did the *Cyclops* o'er their Anvils sweat,  
And their swoln Sinews ecchoing Blows repeat,  
Ere th' Artist had attain'd his vast Design, 325  
And stamp'd Perfection on the Work divine.

Of polish'd Em'ralsds was the curious Ground,  
And fatal Forms of Adamant surround:  
Sparks of etherial Temper flame above,  
Fil'd Remnants of the swift-wing'd Bolts of *Jove*. 330  
A Dragon's scaly Pride is here impress'd,  
And there *Medusa* rears her snaky Crest.  
From golden Boughs *Hesperian* Apples sprung,  
And gay to view the *Colcbian* Tree was hung.  
Torn from the Furies' Hair a Serpent shines : 335  
To this, foul Lust and various Plagues he joins,  
Then dips the whole in Foam of Lunar Rays,  
And hides the Venom in a sprightly Blaze.  
Where'er this came, th' affrighted Graces fled ;  
Love pin'd, and Beauty droop'd her sick'ning Head: 340  
Sorrow still haunts the Mansion where it lies,  
And Hate-engender'd Rage and Fears arise.  
*Harmonia* first its direful Influence prov'd,  
As o'er the furrow'd Plains on Spires she rov'd,

and following Parts of it as in the Case of *Jocasta*, mentioned by *Statius*, and of *Eriphyle* and *Amphiaraus*, whose Fate in the following War was owing to it.

v. 327. *Of polish'd Em'ralsds*] The Antients were superstitiously exact in describing any particular Suit of Armour, Ornaments, &c. as the Shields of *Achilles* and *Aeneas*, the *Ægis* of *Pallas*; and here the Composition of the Materials and Sculpture are highly consistent with the fatal Virtue of this Ornament.

BOOK II. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 57

And fill'd with Hissings dire th' *Illyrian* Coast, 345  
 Till all the Woman in the Snake was lost;  
 Then *Semele*, for whose superior Charms  
 The Thund'rer left his jealous Consort's Arms.  
*Jocasta* too, by Fate's resistless Will  
 (As Fame reports) possess'd this Source of Ill, 350  
 And deck'd with it, in cultur'd Beauty shone,  
 Unconscious of her Crime, her Guilt unknown.  
 Distinguish'd thus, *Argia* pass'd along,  
 And mov'd supreme amid the Female Throng.  
 Fair *Eriphyle* the rich Gift beheld, 355  
 And her sick Breast with secret Envy swell'd.  
 Not the late Omens and the well-known Tale  
 To cure her vain Ambition ought avail.  
 Oh! had the Wretch by Self-Experience known  
 The future Woes, and Sorrows not her own! 360  
 But Fate decrees, her wretched Spouse must bleed,  
 And the Son's Phrenzy clear the Mother's Deed.  
 But when the thirteenth rising Sun had view'd  
 Their Banquets ended, and their Toils renew'd,

v. 355. *Fair Eriphyle*] *Statius* seems in the Character of *Eriphyle* to have given a Lesson of Advice to the fair Sex on their Passion for Dress and Finery. His great Master *Virgil* has afforded him a Precedent in the Episode of *Camilla*, whom he introduces pursuing *Cbloreus* for the sake of his rich Armour and Horse-Trappings.

— Unum ex omni certamine pugna  
 Czca sequebatur, torumque incauta per agmen  
 Famineo prædæ, et spoliolum ardebat amore.

*Æneid*, Lib. 11. 780.

v. 361. *Her wretched Spouse must bleed*] Her Husband was *Amphiaraus*, a celebrated Angur, whom she betrayed to *Polynices* for the sake of this Bracelet, when he was endeavouring to avoid accompanying him in the Wars, in which he knew, he should certainly perish. As for her Son, the Distresses of his Family wrought to great an Impression upon his Spirits, that he was at length seized with an incurable Phrenzy.

58 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK II.

Revolving Thoughts the banish'd Prince remind 365  
 Of his lost *Thebes*, and Empire left behind.  
 That Day returns; when Fortune's partial Hand  
 To his proud Brother gave the whole Command,  
 How the revolting Gods against him join'd,  
 When to a private State reduc'd, he pin'd, 370  
 And saw his Friends misdeem'd in Crouds resort,  
 To bask beneath the Sunshine of the Court.  
 One faithful Sister wou'd have shar'd his Fate,  
 But mourns, abandon'd at the Palace-Gate.  
 Her plaintive Cries, unmov'd, the Warrior hears, 375  
 For Rage refus'd a Passage to his Tears.

Mean while, amid the Silence of the Night,  
 Reflecting Mem'ry brings back to his Sight  
 Those friendly few, that ere from *Thebes* he stray'd,  
 Condol'd, and those, who Signs of Joy display'd. 380  
 Anger and frantic Grief by Turns controul  
 His lab'ring Breast, and shake his inmost Soul.  
 While Lust of Pow'r, untaught to brook Delay,  
 Flames in his Breast, and chides the ling'ring Day.  
 At length the Chief prepares to steer his Course 385  
 To tow'ring *Thebes*, and *Dirce*'s sacred Source.  
 Thus fares a lordly Bull, when forc'd to yield  
 His lovely Mistress, and forsake the Field:  
 But when his wonted Vigour he regains,  
 And a fresh Tide of Blood recruits his Veins, 390  
 He roars, impatient for the promis'd War,  
 Snuffs the fresh Gale, and spurns the Sand afar.

v. 387. *Thus fares a lordly Bull*] This Simile is an Abridgment  
 of that beautiful Description in the third Book of *Virgil's Georgics*.



## BOOK II. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 59

Amaz'd, the Swains his Strength restor'd survey,  
 And the late Victor trembles for his Sway.  
 While thus for War the Youth in secret pines, 395  
*Argia* penetrates his close Designs.  
 One Morn, ere yet *Aurora* promis'd Day,  
 (As in the Folds of Love entwin'd they lay)  
 Why seeks my Lord (she fondly said) to fly?  
 For nought escapes an ardent Lover's Eye, 400  
 Say, why that Bosom heaves with broken Sighs,  
 And Sleep for ever shuns those watchful Eyes:  
 What hidden Cause extorts the silent Tear?  
 Think not a widow'd Bed alone I fear,  
 Or the mere Lust of nuptial Joys should stay 405  
 The destin'd Course, or prompt an Hour's Delay:  
 Tho' scarce twelve Suns have deck'd the Courts of *Jove*,  
 Since Hymen smil'd upon our mutual Love.  
 Thy Bliss alone and Welfare I regard,  
 And only this thy Parting cou'd retard. 410  
 But oh! what Rashness, helpless and alone  
 T' attempt th' Enjoyment of the *Theban* Crown!  
 Will he, whose Pride and Tyranny you found,  
 Ere the first Sun had run his annual Round,  
 Tamely resign the Scepter and obey, 415  
 Till the clos'd Year, restore th' alternate Sway?  
 The Gods some sudden Ruin sure prepare,  
 My boding Soul presaging Fibres scare.  
 Amid the dusky Silence of the Night  
 Imperial *Juno* stood confess'd to Sight. 420  
 Say, what at *Thebes* can your Attention claim,  
 But the fair Object of a former Flame.  
 The smiling Hero clasp'd her to his Breast,  
 And with the Stamp of Love her Cheeks impress'd;  
 Prevents

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Prevents with Blandishments the rising Tears, 425  
 And kindly thus dispells her jealous Fears.  
 Think not the Wheel of Chance will e'er remain  
 In this rough Track. The Clouds may break again,  
 And a far brighter Sun than yet hath shone,  
 Survey thee Partner of a double Throne. 430  
 Resign thy Cares to Heav'n, dismiss thy Fears ;  
 At least they suit not with thy tender Years.  
 From *Jove's* strict Justice and all-seeing Eyes  
 The perjurd Villain ne'er unnotic'd flies.  
 From hence t' *Adrastus*, on whose hoary Head 435  
 A Length of Years had their Experience shed,  
 Speeds the young *Theban* ; nor was *Tydeus* slow  
 T' assist, but shar'd an equal Weight of Woe :  
 For the same Flame, which gen'rous Souls disjoins,  
 With equal Lustre, when united shines. 440  
 Long they debate : at length by joint Consent  
 Decree to sound the Brother King's Intent  
 By Embassy, ere yet from hostile Force  
 They seek Redress, the last and worst Resource.  
 Fraught with th' advent'rous Task bold *Tydeus* glows, 445  
 Tho' long oppos'd by his dissuading Spouse :  
 At length the Compact, which in ev'ry State  
 Secures th' Ambassador a safe Retreat,

v. 437. *Nor was Tydeus slow*] Amidst the Tincture of Barbarism and Ferocity of *Tydeus* there is something very amiable in his Character : not that I pretend to exculpate him for carrying his Revenge to that savage, unprecedented Height, though it was the Result of Friendship, and founded on an honourable Basis. He quarrels and fights with *Polynices* ; but upon the Knowledge of his Misfortunes strikes an Alliance with him, and even sacrifices his Life in his Service.

His Sire's Commands and Sister's Tears prevail,  
 O'ercome her Pray'rs, and sink the doubtful Scale. 450  
 Now on the woody Coast the Warrior strays,  
 And soon the fam'd *Lernean* Lake surveys,  
 Where the fell *Hydra* was by Flames subdu'd,  
 (For Blows in vain the toiling Chief renew'd)  
 And *Nemea*, where e'en now the timid Swains 455  
 Rarely, as erst, chant forth their artless Strains.  
 From thence in View of *Corinth's* Tow'rs he came,  
 And left the Port, which bears *Palemon's* Name;  
 Where in the midst the parting *Isthmus* lies,  
 And swelling Seas on either Side arise. 460  
 Then *Nisus'* flow'ring Sides the Hero gains,  
 And on the left views *Ceres'* favour'd Plains.  
 At last the glitt'ring Prospect greets his Eyes  
 Of *Theban* Tow'rs, that shade the middle Skies.  
 Sublime in regal Pomp th' Usurper fate : 465  
 A Grove of Spears defends th' impervious Gate.  
 Here by his Subjects fear'd, not lov'd, he reigns,  
 And ill-got Pow'r by Tyranny maintains.  
 He blames his Brother's Flight and long Delay,  
 And wonders, he so late demands the Sway : 470  
 Nor wants the Tyrant e'er a specious Plea  
 To veil his Guilt, and mask his Villainy.  
 Amid the thronging Guards young *Tydeus* stands,  
 (A peaceful Olive decks his waving Hands

v. 462. *Ceres' favour'd Plains*] These are the Plains known to the Antients by the Name of *Eleusian* from *Eleusis*, a neighbouring City. They were remarkably fertile, in Return for which Blessing the Inhabitants built a Temple to *Ceres*, their supposed Benefactress.

And

And thus began (his Name and Message known) 475  
 Rough as he was in Speech, and ever prone  
 To Wrath, nor cautious to offend the Ear,  
 Diminish'd ought the Truth, howe'er severe.  
 Say, Tyrant, (had it been your firm Design  
 'At the due Time your Empire to resign) 480  
 Why Heralds did not from your Court appear  
 T' inform your Brother of his ruling Year?  
 T'was then your Duty calmly to sit down,  
 Till the next Year replac'd you on the Throne.  
 But he, convinc'd how well you love to reign, 485  
 Deigns thus to ask, what basely you detain.  
*Phabus* hath now his annual Progress made;  
 And cloath'd the Mountains with returning Shade,  
 Since *Polynices* abject and alone  
 Hath stray'd in Exile drear thro' Realms unknown. 490  
 Tis your's in Turn th' alternate Lot to share,  
 And bear the wintry Wind and open Air.  
 Resign it then, while guiltless shines the Crown,  
 Nor lay too late the bright Temptation down.  
 Your Pow'r in *Thebes* you've long enough display'd, 495  
 In Robes of *Tyrian* Die, and Gold array'd.  
 Now teach your Subjects; those who merit Sway,  
 Shou'd first convince the World, they can obey.  
 He paus'd: and now the Tyrant's Looks reveal'd  
 The boiling Wrath, he had in vain conceal'd. 500  
 Thus with erected Pride, the crested Snake  
 By Stones provok'd, shoots thro' the thorny Brake.

v. 501. *Thus with crested Pride*] The Courage and Intrepidity of  
*Tydeus* are admirably well illustrated in this Simile, which is taken  
 from *Homer*.

Ὡς δὲ δράκων ἐνὶ χερσὶ ὀπίσσω ἄνδρα μένων

His Scales reflect the Sun's attracted Ray :  
 With rolling Spires he marks the furrow'd Way,  
 And thro' his agitated Body draws 505  
 The liquid Venom to his thirsty Jaws.  
 Had not my Brother's Love of Strife been known  
 (He cries) it wou'd appear from thee alone.  
 In whom is stamp'd the Image of his Mind,  
 Alike of Manners rude, and savage Kind. 510  
 Tho' now thou talk'st, as if th' assailing Foe  
 Had min'd our Walls, and laid our Bulwarks low.  
 Yet shou'dst thou thus among a *Scythian* Throng  
 Indulge thy Lust of prate, and lawless Tongue,  
 Thy trampled Limbs and Corse wou'd scarce atone 515  
 For the bare Crimes thy stand'rous Mouth has done.  
 Avaunt; no more provoke my Rage and know,  
 Thy sacred Office scarce can stay the Blow :  
 But first this Answer to th' *Argolic* Lord ;  
 That since his Rashness has unsheath'd the Sword, 520  
 And thus attack'd me with unkingly Pride,  
*Bellona* shall alone our Rights decide,  
 Nor my contentious Brother rule the Land,  
 Which Chance and Birthright gave me to command,

Βιόρωνος, παυὰ φάρμακ', ἴδν δέ τι μιν κέλεται αἰνός,  
 Σμυρδαλίην δὲ δίδωκεν ἰλασόμενον· περὶ χειρῶν.

*Iliad*, Lib. 22. 92.

*Virgil* has also imitated it in his *Æneid*.

Qualis ubi in lucem coluber mala gramina pastus,  
 Frigida sub terra tumidum quem bruma tegebat,  
 Nunc positis novus exuviis, nitidusque juvenâ,  
 Lubrica convolvit sublato pectore terga  
 Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trifulcis.

*Æneas* mentions this Behaviour of *Tydeus* as worthy to be imitated by his Son *Diomedes*. See *Iliad*, B. 4. 370.

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Mean while, unenvied, you may wear the Crown, 525  
 Which lawful Hymen has decreed your own;  
 The Sons of *Argos* may thy Laws obey,  
 And noted *Lerna* own thy happy Sway.  
 Contented, we'll enjoy our *Dirce's* Plain,  
 And fill the Throne where *Cadmus* held his Reign: 530  
 Nor blush the wretched *Oedipus* to trace  
 From *Labdacus* the Founder of our Race.  
 Tho' you can boast an Origin divine,  
 And draw from *Jove* himself the glorious Line.  
 Say, can the fair *Argia*, wont to live 535  
 In all the Pomp a regal Birth can give,  
 Forget the Grandeur of her former State,  
 Nor cast a Wish beyond our Palace-Gate;  
 Whose Ornaments, the Produce of our Land,  
 We owe to our laborious Sister's Hand. 540  
 She'll loath perchance our Mother's coarse Attire,  
 And sordid Rags, which Woes like hers require.  
 Yet more—my Father from his gloomy Cell  
 Will grate her tender Ears with many a Yell.  
 The Vulgar's stubborn Spirit now is broke, 545  
 Their Neck inur'd to bear the royal Yoke;  
 To this we'll add, the *Thebans* will not bear  
 The doubtful Rule of each alternate Heir.  
 Can I then basely sacrifice the State  
 To my returning Brother's treasur'd Hate? 550

v. 525. *Mean while unenvied*] There is a vast Deal of hidden Sarcasm and Gall in this Reply. The Arguments are strong and well-placed, the Language elegant and easy, and the whole full of Spirit and Fire.

v. 531. *Nor blush the wretched Oedipus*] This is the very Height of Dissimulation: we are told by the Poet, that he had despised, insulted and drove his Father from his Palace; and that all the succeeding Calamities were derived from his cruel Usage of him.

Or shou'd a Resignation be my Choice,  
 Say, can I influence the Senate's Voice ;  
 Will they, to whom my gentle Sway is known,  
 Permit me thus to give away the Crown :  
 More had he said, but impotent to bear, 555  
 Thus *Tydeus* stopt him in his full Career.  
 Tho' Art and Nature shou'd conspire to form  
 Huge Battlements against *Bellona's* Storm,  
 And Rocks, as erst at your *Amphion's* Call,  
 Spring from their Base, and form a triple Wall: 560  
 Yet shou'd those Bulwarks, and those Walls beat down,  
 Compel thee to resign the guilty Crown ;  
 Or should thy Pride and Rashness still remain  
 Amidst thy ruin'd Town, and Heaps of slain,  
 Torn from the Head of its expiring Lord 565  
 The shining Spoil shou'd deck my conq'ring Sword.  
 Howe'er enrag'd, I yet must pity those,  
 Whom thy Ambition makes my guiltless Foes,  
 Torn from their Country, Wives and Sons away  
 To sure Destruction in th' unequal Fray. 570  
 What breathless Heaps shall raise *Cithæron's* Height !  
 How shall *Ismenos* groan beneath the Weight !

v. 557. *The Art and Nature.*] *Horace* has a Passage equally grand and elevated.

Ter si resurgat murus athenicus  
 Auctore *Phæbo* ; ter pereat meis  
 Excisus *Argivus*, ter uxor  
 Capta virum puerisque ploret.

Lib. 3. Ode 5.

v. 571. *What breathless Heaps.*]

Eheu quantus equis, quantus adest viris  
 Sudor, quanta moves funera *Dardanæ*  
 Genti ! jam galeam *Pallas* et *Ægida*,  
 Currusque et rabiem parat.

B. 1. Ode 13.

E

Tho'

Tho' void of Faith, and of fraternal Love,  
 Yet dare you thus confront the Gods above ?  
 Will they in calm Neutrality look down 575  
 On broken Oaths, and Honour's Fence o'erthrown ?  
 What Wonder then ? can we expect to trace  
 Fair Virtue's Footsteps in so foul a Race ?  
 Can Length of Years absolve th' incestuous Brood,  
 Or free the long Confusions of their Blood ? 580  
 But hold — the Fates revoke their first Decree,  
 And *Oedipus* revives alone in thee.  
 This Prize of Villainy you bear away ;  
 Our Year we claim. — But why do I delay ?  
 The Warrior spoke, and with resistless Force 585  
 Urg'd thro' the Band of Guards his furious Course.  
 Thus rag'd the Boar, by vengeful *Cynthia* sent,  
 To mark with Ruin *Caledon's* Extent ;

His

v. 581. *The Fates revoke their first Decree.*] This is a Stroke of the strongest Satire that could possibly have been given. The thought is not one of that tinsel and flashy Kind, which occurs so often in the French and Italian Poets ; but manly, spirited, and truly laconic.

v. 587. *Thus rag'd the Boar.*] The Passage subjoin'd from *Ovid*, will exhibit to the Reader's View, whence our Author cull'd the chief Circumstances which adorn this beautiful Simile.

— Oeneas ultorem sprete per agros

Misit aprum.—

Riget horrida cervix :

Et setæ densis similes hastilibus horrent :  
 Stantque velut vallum, velut alta hastilia setæ.

— Dentes æquantur dentibus Indis.

Fulmen ab ore venit.—

Licet eminus esse

Fortibus.—

Dixit et acrata torfit grave cuspide cornum.  
 At manus Oenidæ variat : missisque duabus,  
 Hasta prior terrâ, medio stetit altera tergo,



## BOOK II. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 67

His bristled Back appear'd a thick-set Grove,  
 And *Jove's* own Thunder from his Mouth he drove. 590  
 In vain the shouting Sons of *Greece* furround,  
 And from hurl'd Stones inflict a distant Wound.  
 In Triumph he surveys the prostrate Foe,  
 Till at *Oenides* levelling a Blow,  
 The sideling Chief prevents the glancing Wound, 595  
 And with his Javelin nails him to the Ground.  
 Thus angred, *Tydeus* left the guilty Town,  
 And seem'd to make his Brother's Cause his own.  
 On Earth the fruitless Branch in Haste he threw,  
 And o'er the Plains with winged Ardour flew, 600  
 The Matrons eye from their Balconies' Height  
 The Chief, and vent in Curses their Despight,  
 But not on him alone.—The Tyrant bears  
 His Share of Hate convey'd in secret Pray'rs.  
 Nor does the Monarch's Turn for Treach'ry fail, 605  
 By Nature taught too often to prevail :  
 With Bribes and Threats he gains a chosen Throng  
 To assault young *Tydeus* as he pass'd along :  
 Whose daring Spirit and intrepid Mien  
 Made them fit Actors of so vile a Scene. 610  
 Oh ! fatal Madness of th' ambitious Soul !  
 What Lengths can bind it, or what Heights controul ?

Nec mora : dum sævit, dum corpora versat in orbem,  
 Stridentemque novo spumam cum sanguine fundit,  
 Vulneris auctor adest, hostemque irritat ad iram,  
 Splendidaque adversos venabula condit in armos.

Metamorph. Book 8. Fable 4.

v. 603. *The Tyrant bears.*] Not all the Grandeur and Privileges  
 of a crown'd Head, can secure it from the ill Wishes of an injured  
 People. The Fear of Punishment may restrain the Tongue, but  
 cannot influence the Sentiments of the Heart.

Which dares attack, what each preceding Age  
 Had justly deem'd exempt from hostile Rage.  
 No Arts he'd leave untry'd, no Means forego, 615  
 Wou'd Fortune yield him up his Brother-Foe.  
 Mean while th' unfolding Gates disclose a Train  
 Of Chiefs ne'er destin'd to return again :  
 In one firm Orb was rang'd the glitt'ring Band,  
 Oppos'd, ye Gods ! to *Tydeus'* single Hand, 620  
 As if prepar'd to storm some hostile Town,  
 Or beat the Walls with batt'ring Engines down.  
 For Fear had thus the scatter'd Troop combin'd,  
 The sure Attendant of a guilty Mind.  
 Thro' thorny Woods, a near and secret Way, 625  
 They march'd, unnotic'd, wedg'd in firm Array.  
 Far from the Town two shaded Hills arise,  
 And lose their adverse Summits in the Skies :  
 One Side is bounded by the Grove's Embrace ;  
 A Mountain's Brow o'erhangs the middle Space. 630  
 The Nature of the Place, and gloomy Site  
 Seem'd form'd for Ambuscade, and Deeds of Night.  
 A Path obscure here winds the Rocks between,  
 Beneath are spacious Fields, a flow'ring Scene.  
 Here, posted on a Cliff's declining Brow, 635  
 From whence she might survey the Vale below,  
 The

v. 625. *Through thorny Woods, &c.*] This Place of Ambush is not unlike that described by Virgil in the Eleventh Book of his *Æneid*.

*Est curvo anfractu vallis, accommoda fraudi  
 Armorumque dolis : quam densis frondibus atrum  
 Urget utrumque latus : tenuis quo semita ducit,  
 Angustæque ferunt fauces, aditusque maligni.* V. 522.

v. 635. *Here posted.*] *Oedipus* in *Seneca* speaks thus of the Sphynx.  
*Nec Sphinga cæcis verba nescientem modis*  
*Fugit. Cruentos vatis infandæ tuli*

*Rictus,*

The Sphynx once dwelt.—Her Cheeks were pale to view,  
 And her fell Eyes suffus'd with gory Dew.  
 Oft with expanded Wings the Monster preſt  
 The mould'ring Bones of Mortals to her Breast, 640  
 And hurſ'd her Eyes along the winding Way,  
 Left, unobſerving, ſhe ſhould loſe her Prey,  
 But if his Fate, or the avenging Gods  
 Had drawn ſome Wretch to her obſcene Abodes,  
 She clapp'd her Wings diſtain'd with human Gore, 645  
 And fill'd with Yellings the retentive Shore.  
 Then with protended Nails his Face ſhe ſtruck,  
 And oft her breaking Teeth their Hold forſook.  
 Thus long ſhe reign'd: At laſt with headlong Flight  
 Sprung from the Rocks, and ſought the Realms of Night.  
 For *Oedipus*, by *Phæbus*' Aid, diſclos'd 651  
 The dark *Ænigma* which ſhe'd long propos'd.  
 Untouch'd the Graſs, neglected lies the Wood,  
 And hungry Beaſts at Diſtance ſeek their Food.  
 The Dryads never haunt theſe loathſome Bow'rs, 655  
 Nor Swains with Incenſe bribe the rural Pow'rs.

*Rictus, et albens offibus ſparſis ſolum.  
 Cumque ex ſuperbâ rupe, jam prædæ imminens,  
 Aptaret alas, verbera et caudam movens,  
 Sævi Leonis more, concuteret minas;  
 Carmen popoſci. Sonuit horrendum; inſuper  
 Crepuère malæ: ſaxaque impatiens moræ  
 Revulſit unguis, viſcera expectans mea.  
 Nodofa fortis verba, et implexos dolos,  
 Ac triſte carmen alitis ſolvi feræ.* *Oedipus*, Act I. V. 92.

v. 649. *At laſt with headlong flight.*] Milton alludes to theſe Verſes of our Author.

— The *Theban* Monster that propos'd  
 Her Riddle, and him that ſolv'd it not, devour'd;  
 That once found out and ſolv'd, for Grief and Spight,  
 Caſt herſelf headlong from th' *Iſmenian* Steep.

To other Groves ill-omen'd Birds repair,  
 And from afar abhor the tainted Air.  
 Meanwhile the *Thebans*, urg'd by cruel Fate,  
 Th' *Ætolian* Chief in silent Pomp await ; 660  
 Reclining on their Spears, the Wood furround,  
 And rest their Bucklers on the dewy Ground.  
 The Sun recall'd his unavailing Light,  
 And on the shaded Ocean rush'd the Night ;  
 When *Tydeus*, from an Eminence, survey'd 665  
 Their Shields and Helmets glitt'ring thro' the Shade.  
 Where thro' the scanty Branches *Phæbe* gleams  
 On their bright Armour with refracted Beams.  
 Amazement seiz'd him, yet he onward hied,  
 And grasp'd the faithful Sabre at his Side : 670  
 A pointed Javelin glitter'd in his Hand,  
 While he accosts them with this stern Demand.  
 Warriors, whence come ye, and why thus prophane  
 With War's Alarms, the Night's alternate Reign ?  
 Silent

v. 665. *When Tydeus from an Eminence.*] The two Adventurers in the ninth *Æneid*, are discover'd by the same accident.

Cum procul hos lævo flectentes limite cernunt :  
 Et galea Euryalum sublustri noctis in umbra  
 Prodidit inmemorem, radiisque adversa refulsit. V. 372.

v. 673. *Warriors whence come ye ?*] As we are now arrived at this great Action of *Tydeus*, it may be worth while to transcribe a Passage from *Crucius's* Lives of the Roman Poets relative to it,

“ Nothing can equal the Intrepidity of *Tydeus*, when he was  
 “ attacked, by Surprise, by fifty Men that *Stacles* (whom he had  
 “ provoked by his haughty Behaviour, during his Embassy to him  
 “ from *Polynices*) secretly dispatched after him from *Thebes*, to put  
 “ him to Death, When he comes to discover their Numbers, he  
 “ turns pale with Anger at so base an Enterprize, and, by the  
 “ Slaughter he makes amongst them, soon convinces them of their  
 “ Error, who easily expected to over-power one Man with their  
 “ Numbers. To secure himself from behind, he climbs up a high

Silent they stood : and no Return of Sound 675  
 Convinc'd the Chief he treads on hostile Ground.

A Javelin soon supplies the Want of Tongue,  
 By *Cithonius* hurl'd, the Leader of the Throng.

The Weapon whizzes in its airy Course,  
 Nor miss'd the Mark, tho' destitute of Force : 680

It pierc'd th' *Ætolian* Boar's erected Hide,  
 (The Chief's Defence, and erst the Monster's Pride)

And o'er his Shoulder flew, unstain'd with Blood,  
 Where the false Point deserts the feeble Wood.

Then Palenefs cloath'd his Face, but such as shews 685  
 Excess of Wrath.—His stiff'ning Hair arose.

And now he hurls his angry Looks around,  
 And views, amaz'd, the num'rous Foe surround.

Whence does (he said) this needless Terror grow,  
 Of meeting on the Plain a single Foe ? 690

Advance, like Sons of *Thebes*, and bravely wield  
 Your glitt'ring Weapons on this open Field.

" Mountain, and from thence hurls a prodigious Fragment of a  
 " Rock at his Pursuers, which the strongest Yoke of Oxen could  
 " hardly draw. This likewise is imitated from *Ajax* in *Homer*,  
 " and the Poet has endeavoured to express this Action in his Num-  
 " bers. The Spondees of the first Line express his Contention in  
 " tearing it away from the Rock : The Beginning of the third  
 " breaks it off with a Crack, the rest of the third and fourth  
 " heave it up, and poise it in the Air.

*Saxum ingens, quod vix plenâ cervice Juvenci*

*Vertere humo, murisque valent inferre gementes,*

*Rupibus avellit, dein toto sanguine nixus*

*Sustinet, immanem quærens librare ruinam.* B. 2. Theb.

" To soften the Improbability of so prodigious a Victory as this,  
 " which *Jules* here gained over the fifty *Thebans*, who were all  
 " slain but one Man, whom he forced to live, and bear the fatal  
 " Message of this Misfortune to *Thebes*, the Poet discovers *Minerva*,  
 " who is said to have secretly protected and strengthened him  
 " during the Engagement, and reproves him afterwards for vainly  
 " ascribing the Success to his own Valour." *Life of Statius*, Vol. I.

Scarce

Scarce had he spoke, when rushing from their Holds,  
 A num'rous Band th' intrepid Chief infolds :  
 From Hill and Dale they pour ; their Bucklers yield  
 A silver Sound, and brighten all the Field. 696  
 So when the mingled Cry of Men and Hounds,  
 Inyades the Forest, or the Wood furrounds,  
 From Covert bound the Stags, a fearful Train,  
 And scour in num'rous Herds the verdant Plain. 700  
 The Hero then ascends a Mountain's Height,  
 The best Retreat from such unequal Fight.  
 From hence, when posted on th' impending Brow,  
 He might with Ease annoy the Foes below,  
 Enrag'd, he tore the Fragment of a Rock,  
 (Earth deeply groan'd beneath the mighty Shock)  
 Then swung it round, and poising it on high,  
 Sought where to let the pond'rous Ruin fly.  
 Two Steers beneath th' enormous Weight would groan,  
 But *Tydeus* hurl'd it from the Rock alone. 710

v. 700. *And scour in num'rous Herds.*] This Account of the Deer flying together in Herds is confirmed by *Virgil*.

— Aliâ de parte patentes

Transmittunt cursu campos, atque agmina cervi  
 Pulverulenta fugâ glomerant montesque relinquunt.

v. 705. *He tore the Fragment.*] It may not perhaps be disagreeable to the Reader, to see how the Heroes in *Homer* and *Virgil* handle this Kind of Weapon.

— Ὀδὲ χειμαδίην λάβας χερσὶ

Τυδείδης, μέγα ἔργον, ὃ ἐ δύν γ' ἄνδρ' ἔφραστο

Οἷοι νῦν βροτοὶ ἄσιν, ὃ δὲ μὲν πῶς πᾶσι καὶ οἷοι.

*Turnus* in the twelfth Book of the *Æneid*, Verse 896.

Lib. 5.

Saxum circumspicit ingens

Vix illud lecti bis sex cervice subirent,

Qualia nunc Hominum producit corpora terra

Ille manu raptum trepidâ torquebat in hostem,

Altior insurgens, et cursu concitus Heros,

Thus, with a Goblet lifted in his Hand,  
 Brave *Pholeus* routed the *Theffalian* Band.  
 Thus sapp'd by Time, from some o'erhanging Steep,  
 A rolling Fragment thunders on the Deep.  
 The *Thebans* felt it, ere they saw it fly, 715  
 And crush'd in one promiscuous Ruin lie.  
 Four Chiefs, intomb'd beneath th' oppressive Weight,  
 Clos'd their dim Eyes in one united Fate ;  
 The rest to their strong Holds again repair,  
 Unmindful of their Charge, and promis'd Care. 720  
 His inward Worth and Virtue fail'd to save  
 Brave *Dorylas* from the relentless Grave.  
 In vain proud *Theron* boasts his noble Race,  
 And draws his Lineage from the God of *Thrace*.  
 Next *Habys* fell, a Chief whose Strength could tame  
 The bounding Steed, in Arms a mighty Name : 726  
 But here, alas ! on Foot he fought the War,  
 Nor join'd swift Horses to the rapid Car.  
 Last, *Phedimus* in Death's eternal Shade  
 Sunk, unexperiencing great *Bacchus'* Aid. 730  
 When fiercer now, he saw them quit the Fray,  
 He rush'd, a Lion, on his helpless Prey ;  
 With swift-whirl'd Javelins fed their growing Fear,  
 Annoy'd the Front, and gall'd them in the Rear.  
 With headlong Rage he issues on the Plain, 735  
 (Nor Cares of Life or Safety can detain.)

v. 721. *His inward Worth and Virtue fail'd.*]

Ἀλλὰ δ' ἄρ' ἔκτανε θεοῖσι γυναικὸς Διαιτῆρος  
 Τυδανίδην, ὃς ἔσκεν ὑπερμάνη ἐν Ἀρίστῳ,  
 Ἀσπίος βύτιον, φίλος δ' ἦν ἀνθρώποισι.  
 Πάντας γὰρ φιλοχεύει ὁδῷ ἐπὶ οἰκίᾳ ταύτῃ  
 Ἀλλὰ οἱ τις τῶν γε τότε ἦρκετο λογρὸν ἔλεγον,  
 Πρῶτον ἐπαρτίνας.

Iliad, B. 6. V. 12.

Then seiz'd a glitt'ring Target, which before,  
 While Fate permitted, valiant *Theron* bore :  
 The spacious Orb he moves on ev'ry Part,  
 And stands impervious to each hostile Dart. 740  
 The flaming Sabre waves their Heads above,  
 (The shining Earnest of paternal Love)  
 Now these, now those, with fatal Blows he ply'd,  
 And the red Slaughter swells on ev'ry Side.  
 But while the *Theban* Troops prolong the Fray,  
 Involv'd in Night, Disorder and Difmay,  
 With heedless Rage they deal their Blows around,  
 And on their Comrades oft inflict a Wound :  
 O'er breathless Heaps alternately they reel ;  
 Darts hiss on Darts, and Steel descends on Steel. 750  
 He presses on, o'ercoming those who try  
 The Conflict, and o'ertaking those who fly.  
*Briareus* thus (if *Pblegra* Credit claim)  
 Oppos'd the Regents of the starry Frame.  
 The Thund'rer launch'd his flaming Bolts in vain,  
 Nor *Phabus*' Shafts, nor *Pallas*' Snakes restrain.

v. 753. *Briareus. thus.*] *Briareus* was one of the bold Invaders of Heaven. He is reported to have had an hundred Arms and a hundred Breasts. In the Midst of his Attempt he was struck with a Thunderbolt, and buried under Mount *Ætna*. However, at his first Assault, he spread such a Terror amongst the Gods, that they metamorphos'd themselves into Beasts and Birds, and betook themselves to different Countries till the Storm was over.

This Simile, upon the whole, is really grand and noble; and was intended to give the Reader the most advantageous Ideas of our Hero's Valour and Intrepidity; and we must own, the Poet has gained a double End: and does not leave us in greater Admiration of *Tydeus*'s Courage, than of his own Art and Genius. The two last Lines are elevated to the highest Degree, and cannot fail of pleasing every true Lover of the Sublime.



The Spear of haughty *Mars* unheeded flies,  
 And *Etna's* Forge in vain new Bolts supplies,  
 Unmov'd he stalks along the Fields of Light,  
 And with Regret beholds th' exhausted Fight. 760  
 Thus *Tydeus* in the glorious Conflict glows,  
 And pours, like Lightning, on his trembling Foes:  
 Then, as if bent on Flight, around them wheel'd,  
 And intercepts their Anger with his Shield.  
 Oft from its Orb he pluck'd a bristling Wood, 765  
 The Darts, returning, drink their Master's Blood.  
 His wounded Breast stopp'd many a Weapon's Course:  
 But Heav'n disarm'd them of their fatal Force.  
*Deiobolus* beneath a whirling Blow,  
 Not unattended, sought the Shades below: 770  
 For *Pblegus*, bounting with elated Heart,  
 And Axe upheav'd, rush'd on the Victor's Dart.  
 Then *Lycophon*, and mighty *Gyan* bled,  
 By *Tydeus* number'd with the vulgar Dead:  
 In vain the braver few resist, in vain 775  
 Recall their Comrades scouring o'er the Plain.  
 The crimson Horrors of the fatal Night  
 Allay their Thirst of Blood. and Loye of Fight.  
 When *Chromis*, to the *Theban* Kings ally'd,  
 Proud with the Capture of a Lyon's Hide, 780

v. 779. *When Chromis.*] There is somewhat in the Character of this Warrior, like that of *Namanns* in the ninth Book of the *Æneid*. They are both self-sufficient, confident Bravadoes; and it may be observed, that the Poets never fail of making them slain, and doing what is called poetical Justice.

These little Anecdotes are introduced very opportunely, and serve to recall the Eyes of the Reader from the Scenes of Blood and Horror he is almost perpetually engaged in, to Objects of a more calm and tranquil Nature; besides they refresh his Mind by their Variety, and keep off that Inattention, which will unavoidably creep on in the Course of a long Narration.

With knotted Club in Hand, amidst them ran,  
And thus, a seeming *Hercules*, began.

Him *Dryope* on fair *Ismenus'* Shore  
Brought forth, when heedless of the Charge she bore,  
She mingled with the *Bacchanalian* Train, 785

And drag'd a Bullock to her Patron's Fane.  
Her bursting Womb (an unexpected Birth)  
Discharg'd its Burden on the clay-cold Earth)  
Shall then our Spoils (he cries) in Triumph borne,  
Ye Sons of *Thebes*, this haughty Chief adorn? 790

Shall he at *Argos* our Disgrace proclaim,  
(Tho' he must fail of Credit and of Fame)  
Fulfil ye thus the Promise you have made,  
And is the Royal Bounty thus repaid?

More had he spoke, but whistling from above 795  
Thro' his cleft Jaws a pointed Javelin drove.

Then his dull Ears with hollow Murmurs rung,  
Th' unfinish'd Accents flutter'd on his Tongue,  
Thro' all his Limbs cold crept the Shades of Death,  
And in thick Gasps he yields his vital Breath. 800

You too, brave *Thebians*, if my Verse can give  
Immortal Honour, shall in Fame revive.

Brave *Periphas* beneath th' expiring Load  
Of his lov'd Brother, cross'd the shining Road,  
(Than which nor Length of Time or Place can prove 805  
A brighter Instance of fraternal Love)

His Breast beneath the Cuirass heaves with Sighs,  
Nor the close Helm restrains his streaming Eyes,  
When lo! a Weapon flying from behind.

The subtle Texture of his Ribs disjoin'd; 810  
Nor here delaying, spent its deadly Force,  
But fix'd him to his dying Brother's Corse:

Who felt the Stroke, though on the Verge of Death,  
 And struggling to detain the parting Breath.  
 Thus *Periphas* (whose Faculties were sound, 815  
 And Sense uninjur'd by the recent Wound)  
 "O may thy Sons thus press to thy Embrace,  
 And print warm Kisses on thy clay-cold Face."  
 Thus the brave Pair perform'd their mutual Vow,  
 And fought, with Hand in Hand, the Shades below. 820  
 Mean while with Javelin, and protended Shield  
 The Warrior cours'd *Menetes* o'er the Field.  
 In vain he strove with Safety to retreat,  
 The treach'rous Ground betray'd his hasty Feet.  
 In vain with Blandishments he tempts the Foe, 825  
 And from his Throat suspends the destin'd Blow.  
 "By Heav'n's high Regents, and yon starry Train,  
 "That deck with radiant Orbs th' Etherial Plain,  
 "By sacred Night, propitious to thy Cause,  
 "Oh! stay thy Hand, nor scorn the just Applause, 830  
 "Which from my Mouth thy val'rous Feats shall gain,  
 "Regardless of the Tyrant's hated Reign.  
 "So may proud *Thebes* her slaughter'd Offspring mourn,  
 "And joyful *Argos* hail thy safe Return."  
 To whom the Hero, with a gloomy Frown: 835  
 "Vain are thy Tears, the fatal Die is thrown.  
 "Hence to grim *Pluto's* Realms, nor seek t' enjoy  
 "That Life thou'st sought in *Tydeus* to destroy.  
 "Why lengthen thus the Thread of tedious Life,  
 "Doom'd to be cut in War's approaching Strife? 840  
 This said, his Spear cuts short the Suppliant's Pray'r,  
 For ever mute.—His Soul dissolves in Air.  
 Then boldly pressing on the flying Crowd,  
 He springs, and thus in Triumph vaunts aloud.

## 78 STATIUS' THEBAID. BOOK II.

' Think not, ye Daftards, this sad Night renews 845  
 " Great *Bacchus*' Orgies, and triennial Dues,  
 " No howling Matrons rend their floating Hair,  
 " And clad in Deer-Skins, wreathed Javelins bear;  
 " Or to the Flute's effeminating Sound,  
 " In antic Measures beat the trembling Ground. 850  
 " No Lust-inciting Timbrel here invites  
 " To mix with Eunuchs in unmanly Fights.  
 " Far other Scenes of Battle and of Rage  
 " Employ our Arms, and all our Thoughts engage.  
 " Go, seek your Comrades in the *Stygian* Shade 855  
 " And leave to Men of Worth the martial Trade."  
 While thus he raves, his Sinews lose their Force,  
 And the chill Blood suspends its purple Course;

v. 845. *Think not.*] *Statius* copied this satyrical Speech from that of *Numanus* in the ninth *Æneid*.

O vere Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges ! ite per alta  
 Dyndima, ubi assuetis biforem dat Tibia cantum.  
 Tympana vos baxusque vocant Bêrecynthia matris  
 Idææ. Sinite arma viris, et cedite Ferro.

v. 857. *While thus he raves.*] *Eunuchus* has a similar Passage. Ann. B. 15.

Undique convenient, valet imber, tela tribuno:  
 Configunt parmam; tinnit hastilibus umbo  
 Ærato sonitu galeæ: sed nec pote quisquam  
 Undique nitendo corpus discernere ferro.  
 Semper abundantes hastas frangitque quatitque:  
 Totum sudor habet corpus, multumque laborat.  
 Neq respirandi fit copia præpete ferro.  
 Histri tela manu jacentes sollicitabant.

*Tasso* likewise imitates it, B. 9. Stanza 97.

Fatto istanto hà il Soldan ciò, che è concesso  
 Fare a terrena forza, or più non puote,  
 Tutto è sangue, e sudore, un grave, e spesso  
 Anhelar gli ange il petto, e i fianchi scote,  
 Langue sotto lo scudo il braccio oppresso  
 Gira la destra il ferro in pigre rote;  
 Spezza, e non taglia, e divenendo ottuso,  
 Perduto il brando omai di brando ha l'uso.

Each Object of his Aim eludes the Stroke,  
 And his loose Knees his fleeting Strength bespoke. 860  
 The Bos sustains the well-known Shield no more,  
 And dewy Sweat distils from ev'ry Pore.  
 From his warm Face the bloody Torrents pour,  
 And his discolour'd Hair emits a Show'r.  
 Thus when the King of Brutes has storm'd the Fold 865  
 By Famine press'd, by Shepherds uncontroul'd,  
 He feasts luxurious on the tempting Food,  
 And shakes his Mane, erect with clotted Blood :  
 But quickly pamper'd, bids his Wrath subside,  
 And views the Ground, with slipp'ry Slaughter dy'd ;  
 Then bites the Air, and e'er he hies away, . 871  
 Licks the spare Remnants of his mangled Prey. ,  
 The Warrior now to *Thebes* had bent his Course,  
 And shewn the Marks of his superior Force ;  
 When rushing from the Skies, th' *Athenian* Maid 875  
 His rash Attempt, and daring Ardour stay'd.  
 O thou, by whose right Arm unerring Fate  
 Decrees Destruction to the *Theban* State,  
 With Moderation use whate'er is giv'n,  
 Nor dare beyond the Bounds prescrib'd by Heav'n.  
 All you can wish beyond these glorious Spoils,  
 Is public Credit to reward your Toils.

*Hemon's*

v. 875. *When rushing.*] This Passage is borrowed from that of *Homer*, in the tenth *Iliad*, where *Minerva* descends from Heaven, and advises *Diomedes* to retire, when he would have pushed his Conquests farther. Her Words are,

Νῦν δὲ μῆναι μεγάθυμα Τυδίδε φη  
 Νῦν ἐπὶ γλαφυρῆς, μὲ καὶ πεφθεμένῃ ἰδὲς,  
 Μῆνι τις καὶ Τρώας ἰγέραισι Θείῃς ἄλλῃ.

I believe every one will allow the Allegory here to be just, natural, and unforced. *Idæus*, flush'd with Success, would have returned

*Hæmon's* prophetic Offspring only lives,  
 Nor willing, he his slaughter'd Friends survives.  
 He, who in Wisdom and Experience old, 885  
 Could Fates foresee, and mystic Dreams unfold,  
 Had warn'd the King : but by the Gods Decree,  
 He heard and disbeliev'd the Prophecy.  
 To him, while for delaying Death he pines,  
 The Victor-Chief this odious Task consigns. 890  
 Whoe'er thou art, whom Mercy prompts to spare,  
 This Message to the *Theban* Monarch bear ;  
 Bid him prevent each nodding Turret's Fall,  
 And with deep Trenches fortify the Wall :  
 Arm ev'ry Son of *Cadmus* in his Cause, 895  
 And subject all to military Laws.  
 Ere soon he see me, like a Ray of Light,  
 Break thro' the Cloud of Hosts oppos'd in Fight.  
 To *Pallas* then, Assistant in his Toils,  
 The Hero dedicates the bloody Spoils. 900

to *Thebes*, loaded with the Spoils of his slaughter'd Enemies; but while he is meditating upon it, Wisdom, expressed by *Minerva*, descends from Heaven, and dissuades him from so rash an Attempt. Hence we may see how strongly the Poetry of the Ancients was connected with their Religion, and of what singular Importance their Mythology was to set off and decorate their Compositions. Had the Poet observed, that his Hero's Rashness gave Place to cooler Reflections, we should have passed it over, as indifferent, and unworthy any particular Notice, but when he says, that *Minerva* advised him against putting his Projects in Execution, who is not awakened, attentive, delighted ?

v. 887. *But by the Gods Decree.*] The fair *Cassandra* was subject to the same fatal Disregard.

Tunc etiam fatis aperit *Cassandra* futuris

Ora, dei jussu non unquam credita *Teucris*. *Æn.* B. 2. V. 246.

v. 899. *To Pallas then.*] *Æneas* erects a Trophy of this Kind to *Mars*, *Aneid*, B. 11. Verse 4.

Tergentem quercum, decisis undique ramis,  
 Constituit tumulo, fulgentiaque induit arma,

There grew an Oak which long had brav'd the Rage  
 Of rushing Tempests, and corroding Age :  
 High on a rising Eminence it stood,  
 The Pride and Glory of the subject Wood.  
 This with the Glare of crested Helms he grac'd, 905  
 And Shields with Wounds and hostile Gore defac'd,  
 To these a Heap of shiver'd Spears he joins,  
 And Swords ne'er us'd before on such Designs.  
 Then from the high rais'd Pile his Hands he rears,  
 While Eccho from the Hills returns his Pray'rs. 910  
 O Virgin, Daughter of immortal Jove,  
 (Nor need the Sire his Offspring disapprove)  
 Whose beamy Casque a beauteous Horror crowns,  
 And on whose Shield expressive Gorgon frowns.  
 To thee *Bellona*, great in Arms, must yield, 915  
 And *Mars* resign the Honours of the Field.  
 O deign then (whether from *Pandion's* Mount  
 You rush impetuous, or th' *Aonian* Fount,  
 In whose encircling Waves you bathe your Hair,  
 Oft as the Sons of Earth you make your Care) 920  
 T' accept these Trophies of the conquer'd Foe,  
 Sacred by Will, by Gratitude and Vow.  
 Let these a while suffice : but should again  
 Kind Fortune land me on my native Plain,

Mezenti Ducis exuvias ; tibi magne Tropæum  
 Bellipotens : aptat rorantes sanguine cristas,  
 Telaque trunca viri, et bis sex thoraca petita  
 Perfessumque locis ; clypeumque ex ære sinistro  
 Subligat, atque enssem collo suspendit eburnum.

The Ancients laid so great a Stress upon these hostile Trophies, that they despaired of Conquest without having previously consecrated them to some Deity, who presided over warlike Affairs.

Then to thy Honour golden Fanes shall rise, 925  
 And daily Fumes enwrap the scented Skies.  
 Fix'd on those Hills from whose impending Steep  
 Your Eyes may range along th' *Ionian* Deep,  
 Where *Achelous* fraught with rural Spoils,  
 O'erflows his Banks, and mocks the Shepherd's Toils.  
 Here shall be seen in Brass and sculptur'd Stone, 931  
 A scepter'd Race, and Deeds of high Renown ;  
 While the proud Crest, bright Lance, and captive Blade,  
 Shall on the loaded "cheon shine display'd  
 Which *Jove* and you have whilom render'd mine, 935  
 And which unwilling *Thebes* may yet resign.  
 A hundred Nymphs obsequious to thy Nod,  
 With Torches shall illumine the fair Abode :  
 And in their Wreaths with study'd Art unite  
 The glowing Purple and unsully'd White. 940  
 An aged Matron at thy Shrine shall stand,  
 And feed the Flame with unremitting Hand ;  
 Nor rashly dare with curious Eye prophane  
 The mystic Rites and Orgies of the Fane.  
 E'en *Cynthia* shall without Reluctance see 945  
 The First-Fruits of the Year decreed to thee.  
 Thus *Tydeus* spoke, impatient of Delay,  
 And to fam'd *Argos* took his weary Way.

v. 945. *E'en Cynthia.*] *Tydeus* alludes here to *Diana's* Resentment  
 against *Oeneus*, his Father. See *Ovid. Metamorph.*

F I N I S



**T H E**

1054

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE THIRD.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

**E**TEOCLES, *anxious for the Success of the Ambuscade, passes the Night without Sleep. In the Morning Mæon, the Prophet, returns, and, after a severe Inveective against the Tyrant's Ambition, falls upon his own Sword. The King, enrag'd at his seeming Insolence, forbids the Rites of Burial to be bestowed on him. In the Midst of this Confusion, Ide, a Theban Matron makes a pathetic Lamentation over the Bodies of her two Sons. Alethes endeavours to mitigate the Grief of his Fellow-Citizens, and declares his Resolution of killing himself. Meanwhile Jupiter summons Mars to take the Charge of the War upon him, and deters the Gods from making any Opposition in favour of either Nation. Mars in his Descent from Heaven is met by Venus, who uses all her Art to dissuade him from putting the Commands of Jupiter in Execution. Adrastus and his Council are disturb'd by the abrupt Arrival of Tydeus, who advises them to march to Thebes that Instant. The Common People, exasperated at the Treachery of Eteocles, are scarcely dissuaded from putting this rash Counsel in Execution. Adrastus sends two Augurs for Advice from Jupiter how to act; and is threatened with the Destruction of his whole Army if he makes War. Then Capaneus, a Warrior of distinguished Valour, puts himself at the Head of the Mob, and forces Amphiaraus out of his Retirement, by whom he is acquainted with the Fortune of the War, but to no Purpose. At Midnight Argia importunes her Father to give his Consent to the War, whose Answer concludes the Book.*

T H E  
THEBAID OF STATIUS.

B O O K   T H E   T H I R D .

**T**HE Moon had measur'd half the Course of Night,  
 And the Stars shone with undiminish'd Light :  
 But, though a tedious Interval remains,  
 E'r fair *Aurora* climbs th' Etherial Plains,  
 Involv'd in Cares, the *Theban* Monarch lies : 5  
 Peace fled his Breast, and Sleep forsook his Eyes.  
 While the Reflection of his base Designs  
 Preys on his Mind, and Fear the worst divines.  
 Fear, that anticipates the Voice of Fame,  
 And loves new Objects of Despair to frame. 10

v. 5 *Involv'd in Cares.*] The Pleasures of illegal Acquisitions are unequal to the Cares and Fears arising from them. The Pains of the Body are curable and transient ; but the Stings of Conscience limitable by Repentance and Death only. *Claudian* has described the Torments of a guilty Villain, in the Person of *Rassinus*, with great Spirit and exact Propriety.

At procul exanguis *Rassinum* perculit Horror :  
 Infectæ pallore genæ, stetit ore gelato  
 Incertus peteretne fugam, veniamne subactus  
 Posceret an stantes sese transferret in hostes.  
 Quid nunc Divitiæ ? quid fulvi vasta metalli.  
 Congeries ? quid purpureis effulta columnis  
 Afris prolataeque juvant ad sidera moles ?  
 Addit Iter, numeratque dies, spatioque viarum  
 Metitur vitam, torquetur peste futurâ :  
 Nec recipit somnos, et sæpe cubilibus amens  
 Excutitur, pœnamque luit formidine pœnæ.

In *Rassinum*, Lib. 2.

# 86 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK III.

Alham'd to doubt the Fortune of the Fray,  
 He seeks Excuses for their long Delay ;  
 And cries—Has Fortune, or some fav'ring God  
 Inspir'd the Foe to shun the publick Road ?  
 Or Fame a Rumor of our Ambush spread, 15  
 And rous'd all *Argos* to revenge the Dead ?  
 Nor have I chose a mean, inglorious Train,  
 Averse to Fight, or Strangers to the Plain,  
 But Chiefs, who great in Arms suffice alone  
 To level *Argos*, and secure my Throne. 20  
 Fierce as great *Tydeus* seems and prone t' engage,  
 Yet may he dread my Spear's resistless Rage ;  
 Though Brass and Adamant their Strength unite,  
 To fence his Bosom, and exclude the Fight.  
 Whence these Delays then ? where the doubtful Strife  
 And Toil is ended with a single Life. 26  
 Such various Care his tortur'd Breast inflames:  
 Th' Advent'urers much, but more himself he blames,  
 Who, press'd with Doubts, forbore the final Blow,  
 And safe from *Thebes* dismiss'd the scornful Foe. 30  
 In vain he seeks in Sleep a short Resource,  
 O'erwhelm'd with Shame, distracted with Remorse.  
 As when the Pilot, tempted by the Breeze  
 And glassy Surface, seeks the middle Seas,  
 Oft o'er the Face of *Æther* Clouds arise, 36  
 And *Jove* in sudden Show'rs forsakes the Skies :  
 From East to West the mutt'ring Thunder rolls,  
 And fierce *Orion* shakes the lab'ring Poles.  
 Fain would he seek the Shore, but from the Stern  
 The South drives on, and hinders his Return, 40  
 Till spent with useless Toil, and black Despair,  
 He quits his Art, and trusts to Fortune's Care.

Thus,

Thus, rack'd with Doubts, he chides the lazy Sun,  
And bids the Hours with swifter Motion run.

*Aurora* now had shot a glimm'ring Ray, 45

And the Stars vanish'd from emergent Day;  
When sudden Tremors heav'd the guilty Ground,  
And Heav'n and Earth rebellow'd to the Sound.

Signal of Woe—while from *Cithæron's* Brow  
Rush'd a dissolving Stream of ancient Snow. 50

Upborne in Air aspiring Roofs engage,  
And the sev'n Gates thrice clash'd with martial Rage.

But *Meon*, rescued from th' expecting Jaws  
Of wish'd Destruction, soon explains the Cause,  
Proclaims the sad Reverse of partial Fate, 55  
And threats Misfortunes to the *Theban* State.

For ere in open View he stood confest,  
He deeply groan'd, and beat his manly Breast.

Thus fares a Shepherd when returning Light  
Reveals the Carnage of the former Night. 60

(Whose Flocks, retreating to some thicker Wood  
From the rough Storm, a Troop of Wolves pursu'd)  
Stretch'd on the Sand, he vents his Grief, yet fears  
To bear the Tidings to his Master's Ears :

v. 47. *When sudden Tremors*] This Disaster seem to be usher'd in with too much Pomp and Parade. A more surprising Assemblage of Phenomena could not have preceded the taking of *Thebes*. But some may say, all these Prodigies were preparatory to and presaging of it. Perhaps they were so: but they ought to have happened at a shorter Distance from it; when every one must have been in Suspence concerning the Fate of the City, and every thing that appeared like an Omen, interesting and alarming.

v. 50. *Rush'd a dissolving Stream*] This Article of the Snow's falling is mentioned by *Lucan* in the first Book of his *Pharsalia*.

— veteremque jugis autantibus Alpes  
Discutere nivem,

# 88 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK III.

And, vex'd to find the Vallies bleat no more, 65  
 With plaintive Notes invokes the list'ning Shore.  
 But, when the Throng of Matrons at the Gate,  
 As yet unknowing their Relations' Fate,  
 Beheld him unattended, and alone,  
 They rush, distracted, thro' th' affrighted Town. 70  
 Instead of Questions, shrilling Clamors rise,  
 And Shrieks renew'd by the retentive Skies.  
 Such is the Tumult, when, its Walls o'erthrown,  
 Bellona triumphs o'er some captive Town;  
 Or, when a Vessel, hurried down the Steep 75  
 Of op'ning Surges, cleaves the nether Deep.  
 But, when the sorrowing Prophet had obtain'd  
 Admission to the King, and Audience gain'd;  
 This one (he cries) of fifty valiant lives  
 To bring the dismal Message *Tydeus* gives. 80  
 Thus Fortune or the 'vengeful Fates decreed,  
 Or Heav'n, to punish the perfidious Deed:  
 Or, what I speak with Shame, and own with Grief,  
 The single Valour of this mighty Chief.  
 E'en I can scarcely credit, who survey'd 85  
 The bloody Progress of his reeking Blade.

v. 65. *And vex'd to find the Vallies*] The Poets often transfer the Cause of Sounds from the animal Authors of them, to the Place in which they are represented to be. Hence *Ovid* says the Plains low, and *Hesiod*, that the Mountains bleat.

v. 73. *Such is the Tumult*] *Homer* has a Simile something like this upon the Consternation occasioned by the Death of *Hector*.

— αμφι δὲ λαὸν  
 Κεκυτὸν τ' αἰχμῶν καὶ αἰμάτων κρῖτα στυ.  
 Τῶ δὲ μέλλ' ἀρ' ἴσθ' ὠκυρύνει, σὺν ὀπίσσω  
 Ἰλῖος σφύσσουσα πύλα σμικρὸν κρῖτ' αὐρῆς.

B. II. V. 408.

# BOOK III. STATIUS' THEBAID. 89

But you, O Manes of my Comrades slain,  
 And you, bright Ornaments of *Cynthia's* Reign,  
 Attest, that Life unask'd the Victor gave,  
 And sav'd me from a less inglorious Grave. 90  
 Thus the great Arbiters of Life and Death  
 Enjoin'd : nor can we yield our vital Breath,  
 Till the predestin'd, number'd Hours are come,  
 And Fate has seal'd th' irrevocable Doom.  
 Else had I fall'n in War, and giv'n to Fame, 95  
 What Nature craves, and *Pluto* soon will claim ;  
 Nor thou, for whom *Bellona's* Torch shall burn,  
 The Soldier bleed, and widow'd Beauty mourn,  
 Shalt from thy banish'd Brother long detain  
 The promis'd Empire, and alternate Reign : 100  
 Black Fate hangs over thy devoted Head,  
 Nor *Thebes*, divided from her King, shall bleed.  
 Full fifty Ghosts shall their fresh Wounds disclose,  
 And make thee loath the Season of Repose.  
 More had he utter'd, but the Tyrant's Ire 105  
 Varied his Cheeks with Blood, his Eyes with Fire.  
 Swift from their Seats two daring Villains sprung,  
 Prepar'd to silence his licentious Tongue.  
 Who prone, in all the King commands, t' obey,  
 Shone first at Court, and held the Reins of Sway. 110

v. 104. Full fifty Ghosts.] *Dido* threatens *Aeneas* with the same Punishment.

*Dido* shall come with a black sulph'ry Flame,  
 When Death has once dissolv'd her mortal Frame.  
 Shall smile to see thee, Tyrant, vainly weep,  
 Her angry Ghost, arising from the Deep,  
 Shall haunt thee waking, and disturb thy Sleep.

Dryden, *Æn.* 4.

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Mean

Mean while the Prophet views his naked Sword,  
 Then smiles at the stern Aspect of his Lord;  
 And cries—The Fates forbid thee to command  
 A Life uninjur'd by great *Tydeus'* Hand.  
 My Soul, discharg'd by this auspicious Blade, 115  
 Shall join my Comrades in th' *Elysian* Shade.  
 Thus *Maon*: the preventing Steel suppress  
 Th' imperfect Sounds, and quivers in his Breast.  
 His Mouth and Wound emit a crimson Flood,  
 And form a Channel of united Blood: 120  
 While Nature shivers at approaching Death,  
 And struggles to retain the parting Breath.  
 Smit with the Dread of these portended Woes,  
 The Nobles murmur, and the Senate rose.  
 While Faction to her Side the Rabble draws, 125  
 And with invented Tales supports her Cause.  
 Mean while the Prophet's Friends unite their Aid,  
 And on their Shoulders Home the Corse convey'd.  
 Frowning he seem'd as in Contempt of Death;  
 Nor fled his Sternness with the vital Breath. 130  
 But the fierce Tyrant's Rage as yet surviv'd,  
 Unquenchable as when its Object liv'd.  
 Repuls'd with Threats the Patriot's Friends retire,  
 Nor dare to raise him a funeral Pyre.

v. 129. *Frowning he seem'd*] *Lucan* has some few Lines on the Appearance of *Pompey's* Countenance after Death.

Nor Agonies, nor livid Death disgrace  
 The sacred Features of the Hero's Face;  
 In the cold Visage, mournfully serene,  
 The same indignant Majesty was seen;  
 There Virtue still unchangeable abode,  
 And scorn'd the Spite of ev'ry partial God.

*Rome*, Lib. 8. V. 901.

v. 133. *Repuls'd with Threats*] This Prohibition of the King's is the more insisted on by the Poet, because the Ancients had nothing in



# BOOK III. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 91

Yet rest, illustrious Shade, nor fear the Rage 135  
of envious Slander, or oblivious Age.

But Oh! what Numbers can thy Virtue paint;  
(The stronger Image makes Description faint)  
That Virtue, which th' Usurper durst oppose,  
And warn his Country of impending Woes: 140

Which Partnership in Guilt did e'er disclaim,  
And sought the Path to Freedom and to Fame.  
*Apollo* crown'd thy Worth with early Bays,  
Nor blush'd with thee to share prophetic Praise;  
The Nymph of *Cyrrha* silent shall remain, 145

Nor fam'd *Dodona's* Oak an Answer deign:  
While round the Shrine suspended Nations wait,  
And bribe in vain th' Interpreter of Fate.  
Let fair *Elysium* hence thy Presence boast  
Sequester'd from the dark *Tartarean* Coast; 150

Where, nor *Eteocles* exerts his Reign,  
Nor servile *Thebans* brook the galling Chain.  
Tho' foul in Dust, yet undisfigur'd lies  
The Carcase, guarded by the pitying Skies.  
Untouch'd by Dogs remain his Limbs and Face, 155  
While Birds retire in Rev'rence of the Place.

in greater Horror than the Want of Burial. *Virgil* says, that the  
unburied on the Banks of *Styx*

Centum errant annos, volitantque hæc Littora circum,  
Tum demum admissi, stagna exoptata revisunt.

*Æneid*, B. 6. V. 329.

v. 153. [Tho' foul in Dust] The Ancients held nothing, except  
Life itself, in greater Value than the Burial of their Bodies entire  
and undismember'd: Hence *Pæram* in the 24th Book of the *Iliad*,  
thus interrogates *Mercury* about the Fate of *Hæctor*.

Ἦεν τὰρ ἡνέστι μὲς ποῦς ἢ μὲν κού

Ἦσι κούτι μάλιστα τέμνει πρὸς θανάτῳ Ἀχιλλεύς.

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Mean

Mean while th' *Astolian* Hero's Feats engage  
 The Senate's Care, and fire the Youth with Rage.  
 Here Age and Sex no more Distinction know,  
 But all with an impatient Ardor glow, 160  
 To view the Labours of a single Chief,  
 Chear the young Bride, and sooth the Parent's Grief,  
 The weeping Croud a doleful Concert yields,  
 While plaintive Echo from the neighb'ring Fields  
 Sigh still with sighing answers, Groan with Groan, 165  
 And seems to mourn for Sorrows not her own.  
 But when they reach'd th' uninhabitable Wood,  
 And Rocks that hang incumbent o'er the Flood,  
 A sudden Tumult shakes the nether Plain,  
 (As if the Dead had yet unpitied lain) 170  
 From one huge Mouth the Clamour seems to flow,  
 And all th' Assembly wears one Face of Woe;  
 In tatter'd Robes the God of Sorrow stands;  
 Stern is his Aspect, bloody are his Hands:  
 He beckons to his Vot'ries, and supplies 175  
 Their Lungs with Vigour, and with Tears their Eyes.  
 They lift the Helmets and rejoice to trace  
 The well-known Features of each kindred Face;

v. 169. *But, when they reach'd*] In this Prelude Statius has prepared us for all the succeeding Calamities of *Thebes*, and has given us (as it were) all the Horrors of War in Miniature. The last Book left us highly prepossessed in Favour of *Tydeus*; but the Poet now, like a skilful Musician, changes his Note, and melts us into Pity and Tenderness. Even the Valour of *Tydeus* loses its Lustre, when we reflect on the fatal Consequences with which it was attended.

v. 175. *In tatter'd Robes the God of Sorrow*] This Personification of the Passions is entirely original, and very well executed. The Figure, Countenance and Habit are very consistent with the God of Sorrow, and the two last Lines very natural and highly finished.

Hang o'er the clay-cold Bodies, shed a Flood  
 Of Tears, and steep their Hair in clotted Blood: 180  
 Or seal their Eyes, and, groveling on the Ground,  
 Bathe with the Stream of Grief each gaping Wound.  
 While some with fruitless Care extract the Darts,  
 Or join the sever'd Limbs and kindred Parts.  
 But wretched *Ida* rushes to and fro, 185  
 In all the raging Impotence of Woe,  
 Thro' Thorns and Clouds of Dust she bends her Way;  
 She rends her Tresses venerably grey.  
 Horror accompanies each streaming Tear,  
 Nor the Spectators pity her, but fear. 190  
 She seeks her Sons among the num'rous Dead.  
 And mingles with the Dust her aged Head.  
 Thus the *Theffalian* Hag, at whose Command  
 Reviving Phantoms leave the *Stygian* Strand,  
 In bloody Fields explores her lifeless Prey, 195  
 Lur'd with the Carnage of the former Day,

v. 185. *But wretched Ida*] The Character and Distress of a tender Mother are admirably well supported, and described in the Person of *Ida*. But what gives the highest Colouring, is the Poet's Remark, that her Countenance rather excited Horror than Compassion in the Hearts of the Spectators. A common Poet would have described her as weeping and wringing her Hands in a regular Manner; but *Statius* represents her as frantic. She has not the Face of a tender Mother, but of a Fury; and does not lament, but rave.

v. 193. *Thus the Theffalian Hag*] I must beg Leave to refer my Reader to the Description of the Sorceress *Eriabo*, as drawn in the sixth Book of *Lucan's Pharsalia*, in my Opinion one of the finest Passages in that Author. The Likenesses are too strong to escape his Observation, and I doubt not but the Pleasure he will meet with, will abundantly compensate for the Trouble of referring to it.

When

When Night, propitious to her mystic Charms,  
 O'er the wide Globe extends her sable Arms,  
 To various Carcases, by Turns she flies,  
 And, bending, o'er them rolls her haggard Eyes : 200  
 Then, mutt'ring magic Sounds with impious Voice  
 Demands on which to fix her doubtful Choice.  
 The Ghosts, with Horror eye the World again,  
 And *Pluto* sorrows for his thin'd Domain.  
 Beneath a Rock the happy Brothers lay, 205  
 And shar'd alike the Fortune of the Fray.  
 One Day, one Hand suppress'd their vital Breath,  
 And lock'd them in inseparable Death.  
 When *Ida* saw, her brim-full Eyes disclose  
 A pearly Stream, and thus she speaks her Woes. 210  
 Are these your Kisses ? this your last Embrace,  
 And these the Smiles which Death could not efface ?  
 Has Fate, propitious to the mutual Vow,  
 Preserv'd your Union in the Shades below ?

v. 205. *Beneath a Rock*] I need not acquaint the Reader who these two Brothers were, if he has attentively read what has gone before : but, if his Memory should fail him, let him return to the 815th Verse of the 2d. Book, where he will be fully satisfied.

v. 211. *Are these your Kisses*] There is no Speech in the whole Thebaid more worthy our Attention than this of *Ida*. The Reader will not find in it a Collection of trite Sentiments, and Common-Place Observations : but will, I doubt not, think it the most rational, pertinent and spirited Speech in the whole Poem. I shall do *Statius* but common Justice to say, that his Art is here as much superior to that of *Virgil* in the Speech of *Euryalus's* Mother, as the *Æneid* is upon the whole to the Thebaid. *Ida* really talks like a sensible, philosophical Matron ; she does not with her Sons had escaped with Life, but that they had fallen in a more honourable and conspicuous Manner. I only wonder she so well recovered the Use of her Reason, as to throw out these Reflections, since her Appearance at first gave us little Ground to expect it.

But

BOOK III. STATIUS: THEBAID. 95

But say, whose languid Eyes, unhappy Pair, 215  
 Whose Wounds shall first employ a Mother's Care?  
 Are you, late Objects of my Hopes and Fears,  
 The Boast and Prop of my declining Years!  
 How chang'd, alas! my Offspring since I strove  
 To match the Daughters of Almighty Jove, 220  
 More happy she, to whom the Queen of Air  
 Denies a Parent's short-liv'd Joys to share.  
 By whom *Lucina* uninvok'd remains,  
 Who, if she tastes no Pleasures, feels no Pains.  
 Yet 'twou'd have been some Shadow of Relief, 225  
 Some small Alay, and Solace of my Grief,  
 Had Fame, the dying Hero's only Meed,  
 Shone on your Tomb, and blaz'd the glorious Deed:  
 But here, alas! your Lives obscure you yield,  
 Nor public Praise survives the deathful Field. 230  
 Rest then, and may no Violence remove  
 This sacred Emblem of fraternal Love.  
 One Fire shall your connected Bodies burn,  
 And your pale Ashes grace one common Urn.  
 Others mean while, in equal Strains lament 235  
 Their lifeless Friends, and curse the dire Event.  
 This mourns a Father, this a Brother dead,  
 And that a Partner of the nuptial Bed.  
 High on a neighb'ring Hill a Thicket stood,  
 Whose conscious Height o'erlooks the Field of Blood:  
 At this the *Thebans* level all their Strokes, 241  
 And humble to the Ground the tallest Oaks.  
 Till thro' the Trees they cleave an open Way,  
 And the dark Grove admits a sudden Day.  
 While, clinging to the Piles, they shun Relief, 245  
 Averse to Comfort, and o'ercharg'd with Grief.

*Alethes* strove to calm their growing Rage,  
 A Chief advanc'd in Wisdom as in Age.  
 Oft, on the Verge of Ruin, has our State  
 Become the Sport of Fortune and of Fate; 250  
 Since *Cadmus* sow'd with Serpent's Teeth the Soil  
 And reap'd an Iron Harvest of his Toil,  
 When, scar'd with the new Sounds of clashing Shields,  
 The Swain forsakes his patrimonial Fields.  
 Yet never did the Sons of *Cadmus* shew 255  
 So deep a Sense, such Consciousness of Woe,  
 E'en when the Palace of *Agenor's* Son  
 With wasting Flames, and bright Destruction shone:  
 Or *Athamas*, in quest of Glory, slew  
 His Son, and home the panting Carcase drew. 260  
 Not with such Shrieks the *Theban* Palace rung,  
 When from her Throne the fierce *Agave* sprung,  
 And knew the Victim of her vengeful Sword,  
 To Sense and Mis'ry at once restor'd.  
 If aught could match the present Scene of Woe, 265  
 'Twas when the Patron of the Silver Bow,  
 Dispatch'd for *Niobe's* ambitious Boast,  
 Her num'rous Offspring to the *Stygian* Coast.  
 Such dire Alarms the tim'rous Vulgar shook  
 And thus in Crouds the City they forsook. 270  
 Then ev'ry Temple rung with frequent Groans,  
 And ev'ry God was weary'd with their Moans.  
 Sev'n ample Gates imperial *Thebes* adorn,  
 Through each in Pomp two Funerals were borne.

v. 261. Or *Athamas*] For an Account of *Athamas*, see the Note on the 15th Verse of the first Book.

v. 275. Sev'n ample Gates] The Ancients differ concerning the Number of *Niobe's* Children. *Homer* and *Propertius* mention only



But now the weeping Sons of *Thebes* atone  
 For Royal Crimes, and Mischiefs not their own, 290  
 E're Fame, tho' hast'ning with the first Report  
 Of War proclaim'd, has reach'd the *Argive* Court.  
 How shall the gasping Nations pant for Breath,  
 What Labours rise, what various Scenes of Death! 294  
 What breathless Heaps, what rushing Streams of Blood  
 Shall dye the Ground, and swell the neighb'ring Flood.  
 Unhappy Youths, whom Fortune only spares,  
 For greater Evils which she now prepares :  
 Me Nature summons to the Shades below,  
 And kindly snatches from approaching Wee. 300  
 Thus spoke the Sage ; and from the Tyrant's Crimes  
 Dates all the Mischief of succeeding Times :  
 For on his Mind no conscious Terrors hung,  
 Nor check'd the honest Freedom of his Tongue.  
 Resolv'd to die, while Life was in his Pow'r, 305  
 Nor linger to the last predestin'd Hour.  
 Mean while the scepter'd Ruler of the Skies  
 To weeping *Thebes* directs his awful Eyes,  
 Surveys the Carnage of the former Night,  
 And summons *Mars* to plan the future Fight. 310  
 Who, loaded with the Spoils of conquer'd *Thrace*,  
 Impell'd his Steeds along th' aerial Space.

v. 293. *How shall the gasping Nations*] This is copied from *Horace*, Book 1. Ode 15. The Words of *Statius* are,

Quantus equis, quantusque viris in pulvere crasso  
 Sudor.

These of *Horace*,

Eheu quantus equis, quantus adest viris  
 Sador!



# BOOK III. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 99

His Helm with borrow'd Lightning fires the Pole,  
 Beneath his Car incessant Thunders roll.  
 His Arms, enliven'd by the Sculptor's Art, 315  
 With golden Monsters brave each hostile Dart;  
 While his Shield bears the Sun's reflected Ray,  
 Nor shines inferior to the God of Day.  
 When *Jove* beheld him in his bloody Car,  
 Array'd in all the Terrors of the War, 320  
 He cries—Let *Argos* feel thy wafting Force,  
 And Death and Slaughter mark thy dreadful Course :  
 Still on thy Visage may these Clouds remain,  
 And cause a purple Deluge o'er the Plain.  
 Let *Thebes* no more the Rage of *Tydeus* mourn, 325  
 But breathe Revenge, and for the Combat burn ;  
 To thee devote her Warriors' Lives and Hands,  
 And freely execute thy dire Commands.  
 From hence repair to rouse the States of *Greece*,  
 Dissolve the Truce, and break the Bonds of Peace. 330

v. 313. *His Helm with borrow'd Lightning*] This Description of *Mars* is full of that sublime Imagery so peculiar to our Author. The God of War is not arrayed in his own simple Terrors, but calls in to his Assistance those of *Jupiter* and *Apollo*. The Noise of his Chariot is equal to that of Thunder, and the Splendor of his Helmet to Lightning, while the Orb of his Shield matches that of the Sun. The Invention of his Passage from *Thrace* (which was fabled to be the Country of that God) is a very beautiful and poetical Manner of celebrating the martial Genius of that People, who were engaged in perpetual Wars.

v. 323. *Still on thy Visage*] In this beautiful Allegory we may discover an amazing Boldness, and exact Propriety of Expression. This Chain or Continuation of Metaphors is reducible (tho' much superior) to a Simile. *Jupiter* wishes, that the Frowns on the Brow of *Mars* might be as productive of an Effusion of Blood, as Clouds are of a Shower of Rain. If this is not the *Curiosa sœlicitas* of *Quintilian*, I know not where it exists.

'Tis thine in Heav'n to kindle fierce Debate,  
 And fire immortal Breasts with mutual Hate.  
 Nor is this Task assign'd to thee alone;  
*Jove* has himself the Seeds of Discord sown:  
 See *Tydeus*, loaded with *Baotian* Spoils, 335  
 To *Argos* bears the Product of his Toils.  
 From his Report shall lasting Strife succeed,  
 And either Candidate for Empire bleed.  
 Thou but inspire the Nations with Belief,  
 And arm them to revenge their injur'd Chief. 340  
 Hear then, ye Pow'rs, and what you hear, approve,  
 Nor with Intreaties tempt almighty *Jove*.  
 For thus th' impartial Destinies decreed,  
 And have our Sanction to compleat the Deed.  
 While Nature yet in wild Confusion lay, 345  
 Nor *Phæbe* rul'd the Night, nor *Sol* the Day;  
 The Fates had seal'd this Nation's future Doom,  
 And laid the Plan of Battles yet to come.  
 Permit me then to warn succeeding Times,  
 (Avenging on the Son his Father's Crimes) 350

v. 343. *For thus th' impartial Destinies*] The Learned differ in their Opinions concerning the Power of the *Fates* and *Jupiter*: some affirming the former, and others the latter to be superior. But I think the best Way is to steer the middle Course, and suppose them endued with an equal Degree of Authority and always acting in Conjunction. As here Fate decrees the Destruction of *Thebes*; but *Jupiter*, having the Power of Incidents to bring it to pass, fulfills that Decree by providing Means for it. *Jupiter* begins his Speech to the Gods in a similar Manner in the 8th Book of *Homer*.

Κίλυτί μιν πάντες τι θεοί, πᾶσαι τι δίκαιαι,  
 Ὅφρ' ἄγω τάμει θυμὸς ἐν στήθεσσι καλῶσι.  
 Μᾶτε τις ὦν θύλακα θεὸς τόξα, τις ἄρσεν  
 Πρωτόν διακίρσῃ ἔμὸν ἔπος· ἀλλ' αὖτις πάντες  
 Αἰεὶτ', ἔφρα τάχιστα πληυτέσθω τάδε ἔργα.

Verse 5.

BOOK III. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 101

And trace from the Records of distant Age  
 Past Actions which deserve my present Rage.  
 For, by the Glories of the starry Sphere,  
 And *Styx*, whose awful Name the Gods revere,  
 This dreaded Arm shall crush the *Theban* Race, 355  
 And rend each Structure from its solid Base ;  
 In one huge Ruin heap the Realms around,  
 And level *Argive* Turrets with the Ground :  
 Then bid the Deep no more Confinement know,  
 And give to *Neptune* all the World below. 360  
 In vain shall *Juno* deprecate its Fall ;  
 Or, clinging to her Fane's devoted Wall,  
 Of angry *Jove*, and partial Fate complain :  
 Resent she may, but must resent in vain.  
 He spoke : nor durst the Pow'rs of Heav'n reply : 365  
 A rev'rend Horror silenc'd all the Sky.  
 Such Stillness o'er the Face of Nature reigns,  
 When Summer smiles auspicious on the Plains ;  
 When not a Breath of Air disturbs the Deep,  
 And Billows on the Shore reclining sleep : 370  
 The peaceful Groves retain their youthful Green,  
 And not a Cloud o'ercasts the beauteous Scene ;  
 While, half-exhausted by the thirsty Sun,  
 Beneath their Banks the peaceful Rivers run.  
 Mean while the God of Arms prepares for Fight, 375  
 Resumes the floating Reins, and shuns the Right.  
 Prone down the Steep of Heav'n the Chariot flies,  
 Glows in the Whirl, and burns along the Skies.  
 When *Venus*, Offspring of the briny Flood,  
 To stay his dreaded Progress adverse stood. 380

v. 379. *When Venus' Offspring, &c.*] The Ancients (to whom we owe many Things) first taught us to turn the Virtues and Endow-  
 ments

The Steeds recoil'd; reluctant to the Reins,  
 And smooth, in Rev'rence, their erected Manes:  
 Then champ, in Honour of th' acknowledg'd Fair,  
 The foaming Bit, and snuff the trembling Air.  
 Her snowy Bosom gently press'd the Yoke, 385  
 And thus, with previous Tears, the Goddess spoke:  
 Will *Mars* with his own Offspring then engage,  
 And on a guiltless Nation vent his Rage?  
 Say, shall the Product of our mutual Love,  
 And these my Tears e'er unavailing prove? 390  
 Did I for this consent to your Embrace,  
 Bereft of Honour, branded with Disgrace?  
 Go then; thy Flight no longer I detain;  
 Go; bathe in kindred Blood the *Theban* Plain.  
 Yet *Vulcan* (tho' from him I little claim) 395  
 Not thus would slight the Object of his Flame.

ments of the Mind into Persons, to make the Springs of Action become visible; and because they are given by the Gods, represent them as Gods themselves descending from Heaven. In the same Manner they described the Vices, which occasion our Misfortunes, as supernatural Powers, inflicting them upon us, and even our natural Punishments are represented as Punishers themselves. Hence it is, that we find *Juno* and *Minerva* on the one Side, and *Venus* on the other, in continual Variance through the whole *Iliad*, *Æneid*, and *Thebaid*.

v. 387. *Will Mars then*] This Speech of *Venus* is wrote in the Spirit of *Dido's* to *Æneas*; and in many Places not only the Sentiment, but even the Diction is similar, as for Example:

*Say, shall the Product*] so *Virgil*,

Nec te noster Amor, nec te data dextera quondam,  
 Nec moritura tenet crudeli sanere Dido?

*Did I for this consent, &c.*]

Extinctus pudor, et, quâ solâ fidera adibam,  
 Fama prior.

*Go then; thy Flight, &c.*]

Neque te teneo, neque dicta refello.  
 I, sequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas.

How would th' uxorious God at my Demand  
 In Toils unceasing ply his skilful Hand.  
 And scarcely doubt (so valued are my Charms)  
 For *Mars* himself to frame immortal Arms. 400  
 But hold, nor let me waste my Time in vain ;  
 Or hope from *Mars* a trifling Suit to gain :  
 Can Hearts of Adamant, or Breasts of Steel  
 The gentle Impulse of Compassion feel ?  
 Yet say, for what, by whose Inducements won, 405  
 You sought Alliance with *Agenor's* Son ;  
 And forc'd the Pledge of our Delights to share  
 Woes she deserves not, and another's Care ?  
 You promis'd once a Progeny divine  
 Of *Thebans* rising from the *Tyrian* Line 410  
 Should stand renown'd in Arms and martial Fame,  
 And to succeeding Times transmit their Name.  
 But had the Fates assented to my Vows,  
 More distant Climes had yielded her a Spouse,  
 Where endless Winter *Tbracian* Seas constrains, 415  
 And binds the frozen Flood in chrystal Chains.  
 Yet could my Tears but bid the *Thebans* live ;  
 These ancient Crimes I cou'd with Ease forgive :  
 Though on erected Spires our Daughter roves,  
 And darts fresh Poison on th' *Illyrian* Groves. 420

v. 407. *And forc'd the Pledge*] This was *Harmonia*, who was married to *Cadmus*.

v. 409. *You promis'd once*] The same Goddess reminds *Jupiter* of a like Promise concerning *Aeneas* and his Companions.

Certè hinc Romanos olim volventibus annis,  
 Hinc fore ductores revocato a sanguine Teucri,  
 Qui mare, qui terras omni ditioe tenerent.

*Virg. Aeneid. Lib. 1. Verse 238.*

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Thus

Thus spoke the Fair, with Sorrow-streaming Eye,  
 When the fierce God, half willing to comply,  
 Leap'd from his Car, and rushing to her Arms,  
 With eager Eyes devour'd her heav'nly Charms :  
 At length replies ; while sympathetic Woe 425  
 Unbends his Soul, and bids the Torrent flow.  
 O dearer far than War, or hostile Spoils,  
 Source of my Bliss, and Solace of my Toils !  
 To whom alone of all the Pow'rs of Heav'n  
 To meet my dreaded Arms, unhurt, 'tis giv'n, 430  
 To stop my Coursers in their full Career,  
 And bid my Hand dismiss the brandish'd Spear.  
 Your former Favors I can ne'er forget ;  
 Nor Words express, nor Deeds discharge the Debt :  
 But e'er Oblivion shall thy Name erase, 435  
 Or make me flow in *Cytherea's* Praise ;  
 May *Pluto*, and the Shades of *Orcus* claim  
 This Soul, bereft of its immortal Frame.

v. 425. *And rushing to her Arms*] In the common Editions the Words are,

Clyeoque receptam .

Lædit in amplexu.

But *Barthins* very reasonably objects to this as erroneous, and corrects it thus

Illigat amplexu.

which Sense I have adopted in the Translation.

v. 429. *To whom alone*] Here is a latent Prohibition to *Venus* to repeat the same Indiscretion : He tells her, that she alone, being the weakest of all the Gods, could have done it with Impunity.

v. 435. *But, e're Oblivion*] These voluntary Imprecations were customary among the Ancients. Thus *Dido* :

Sed mihi vel tellus optem prius ima dehiscat ;  
 Vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,  
 Pallentes umbras Erebi, noctemque profundam,  
 Ante, pudor, quam te violo, aut tua Jura resolvo. Lib. 4.

Mean,

BOOK III. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 105

Mean while, O Queen, permit me to fulfill  
 The Fate's Decree, and *Jove's* unalter'd Will : 440  
 (For here thy *Vulcan* little wou'd avail,  
 And all his boasted Art and Labours fail)  
 Hard is the Task, alas ! you now enjoin,  
 T' oppose the Lord of *Æther's* fix'd Design.  
 I war not with the Higheft : all above 445  
 Submit and tremble at the Hand of *Jove*,  
 Then banish Sorrow, and your Fears resign,  
 (Secure, what *Mars* can do, is ever thine)  
 And bear with Patience what the Fates ordain,  
 To thwart is Rashness, and Resistance vain: 450  
 But, when *Bellona* waves her flaming Brand,  
 And summons to the War each *Argive* Band,  
 Myself will head in Fight the *Theban* Train,  
 And heap with slaughter'd Foes the crimson Plain.  
 Then, Goddess say, will *Mars* unjust appear, 455  
 When *Argive* Blood shall smoke upon his Spear ?  
 This Right I challenge in the Field of Fame,  
 This Fate allows, nor *Jove* disputes my Claim.  
 He spoke : and, eager for the promis'd War,  
 Urg'd o'er the vast Expanse his rapid Car. 460  
 Thus falls the Bolt, when from the Northern Pole,  
*Jove* bares his Arm, and bids the Thunder roll ;

v. 441. *For here thy Vulcan*] Here is a sarcastical Reflection on the Infirmary of *Vulcan*, and an Hint of his own Superiority. His Oration is delivered with the usual Bluntness of a Soldier, and his subsequent Behaviour highly consistent. He does not stay to see what Impression his Excuse, will make on the Mind of *Venus*, or whether his Offers in Part will compensate for his non-compliance with the whole ; but hurries on with a seeming Indifference about the Result of it.

v. 461. *Thus falls the Bolt*] *Lucan* has made Use of the same Comparison in the first Book of his *Pharsalia*.

Pregnant with Death the glaring Mischief flies,  
 And cleaves a triple Furrow in the Skies :  
 A fatal Omen to the greedy Swain, 465  
 Or trembling Sailors on the wat'ry Main.  
 Mean while young *Tydeus* seeks the winding Shore,  
 And measures back the Fields he cross'd before.  
 His Eyes, attracted with the distant Glare,  
 Survey the Temple of the Queen of Air. 470  
 His Hair grew stiff with Dust and mingled Gore,  
 While Streams of Sweat distill from ev'ry Pore ;  
 His Eyes, bereft of wonted Sleep, display  
 A sanguine Hue, and sicken at the Day.  
 His Toil increases, as his Breath he draws, 475  
 And parching Thirst inflames his clammy Jaws :  
 Yet, unimpair'd by Toils, or hostile Blows,  
 His Soul with undiminish'd Ardor glows.  
 Thus, when the Victor-Bull surveys again  
 The subject Herd, and late-abandon'd Plain ; 480  
 He roars, and, traversing the Fields around,  
 Proclaims his Conquest in each ecchoing Ground :  
 Or eyes the swelling Honours of his Breast,  
 And Blood, his Adversary once possess.  
 While from afar, his Rival with a Groan, 485  
 Surveys the pleasing Kingdoms once his own.  
 Mean while *Oenides*, as he pass'd along,  
 In ev'ry Town convenes the rustic Throng :

Qualiter expressum ventis per nubila fulmen,  
 Ætheris impulsu sonitu, mundique fragore  
 Emicuit, rupitque diem, populosque paventes  
 Terruit, obliquâ præstingens lumina flammâ :  
 In sua templa furit : nullâque exire vetante  
 Materiâ, magnamque cadens, magnamque revertens  
 Dat stragem late, sparsoque recolligit ignes.



His Words the Crowd to yield him Aid engage,  
 And fire the Youth already prone to Rage. 490  
 His Country, Name, by whom, and whither sent  
 Are soon divulg'd, and what the dire Event,  
 The Sight and Tale of the returning Chief,  
 Among the trembling Croud enforce Belief:  
 Then, sent by *Mars*; officious Fame appears. 495  
 Removes each Doubt, and doubles all their Fears.  
 Scarce had he reach'd the Palace, when he view'd  
*Adrastus*, studious of the public Good,  
 Amidst his Peers catch'd; while thus they said,  
 Attentive to the Subject in Debate, 500  
 Arms, Arms, he cries: Now, Monarch, may'st thou  
 prove  
 Thy Blood, and martial Heat deriv'd from *Jove*.  
 Justice and Piety are now no more,  
 And slighted Faith has fled the *Theban* Shore.  
 More amicable Treatment had I found 505  
 Where endless Slaughter dyes the *Scythian* Ground:  
 Or the stern \* Guardian of *Bebrycia's* Grove  
 Once reign'd, in Scorn of hospitable *Jove*.  
 Nor blame I those, by whom it was enjoin'd,  
 Nor mourn, repentant of the Task assign'd. 510  
 By *Jove* 'twas pleasant to dispute the Claim  
 Of boasting *Thebes* to military Fame.  
 Full fifty Chiefs, (forgive the seeming Boast)  
 The Flow'r, the Pride, the Bulwark of their Host,  
 Came forth as if to storm some leaguer'd Town, 515  
 O'erthrow its Walls, or throw its Ramparts down.  
 Tho' naked and unarm'd, I scorn'd to fly,  
 Resolv'd to conquer, or with Honor die.

But hear the Sequel : all in Fight o'erthrown,  
 Lie wallowing in their Blood before the Town. 520  
 But oh ! what Trophies must the *Thebans* yield,  
 Would *Argos* lead her Armies to the Field  
 While Fear prevails, while, scatter'd on the Plain,  
 They pay the last sad Office to the Slain.  
 Myself will share the Fortune of the Day, 525  
 Though these few Wounds require a short Delay.  
 The Senate rose : while with dejected Eyes,  
 The Warrior sprung from *Cadmus*, thus replies.  
 How hateful to the Gods, alas ! I'm grown,  
 To view those Wounds, deserv'd by me alone! 530  
 Was this, proud Chief, the only Way to show  
 Thy causeless Hate, and prove thyself a Foe ?  
 Then let me not — Ah ! can I wish to live,  
 And *Tydeus*, wounded in my Cause, survive ?

v. 529. *How hateful to the Gods*] It is an exquisite Piece of Art, when you seem to persuade one Thing, and at the same Time enforce the contrary. This Kind of Rhetoric is of great Use in all Occasions of Danger, and of this *Statius* has afforded a most striking Instance in the Oration of *Polynices*. 'Tis a Method perfectly wonderful, and even carries in it an Appearance of Absurdity ; for all that we generally esteem the Faults of Oratory by this Means become the Virtues of it. Nothing is look'd upon as a greater Error in a Rhetorician, than to alledge such Arguments as either are easily answered, or may be retorted upon himself; the former is a weak Part, the latter a dangerous one ; and *Polynices* here designedly deals in both. For it is plain that if a Man must not use weak Arguments, or such as may make against him, when he intends to persuade the Thing he says ; then on the other Side, when he does not intend it, he must observe the contrary Proceeding, and make what are the Faults of Oratory in general, the Excellencies of that Oration in particular, or otherwise he will contradict his own Intention, and persuade the contrary to what he means. I have dwelt the longer on this Remark, to render the Beauty of this Speech more visible and obvious ; and to prevent any scrupulous Objections, which might be of Disadvantage to our Author.

Mean while, may *Argos* flourish in Repose, 535  
 Nor owe to me the Cause of future Woes :  
 No Matron, angry for her Children slain,  
 Of me, the Source of Mischief, shall complain.  
 No Widow shall of me her Spouse require,  
 Nor Orphan, weeping for his absent Sire. 540  
 I rush to Death, nor seek ye to detain ;  
 'Tis Honour prompts me, and you urge in vain.  
 To *Tydeus*, *Thebes*, my Country, this I owe,  
 Their Welfare claims, nor I retard the Blow.  
 Thus veil'd the Chief the Wishes of his Mind, 545  
 And artfully pronounc'd the Speech design'd.  
 At first his Audience wept the injur'd Chief :  
 Now stronger Wrath supplies the Place of Grief.  
 Nor did the Youth alone impatient glow,  
 To wrest the Scepter from th' usurping Foe : 550  
 A like Resentment fires the Breast of Age,  
 And rous'd the dying Sparks of martial Rage.  
 One Will inclin'd to draw the glitt'ring Blade,  
 One Voice declar'd their Promises of Aid.  
 But old *Adraustus*, great in Arts of Sway, 555  
 And Prudence, thus enjoins a short Delay,

v. 555. *But old Adraustus*] The Reader may perhaps be at a Loss to conceive how *Adraustus*, who had promised *Polynices* his Aid in Case of a Rupture between him and his Brother, should hesitate one Moment about fulfilling his Engagement, after such a complicated Series of ill Usage from *Eteocles*. But there were many Reasons, which will justify this Conduct: such as the Care of his own Safety (for it was uncertain what would be the Event of his taking up Arms.) Secondly, the Prevention of those Calamities, which his People must necessarily undergo in the Course of a long War; and, Thirdly, the avoiding the Anger of the Gods, who ought always to be consulted upon such Occasions, according to the Opinion of the Heathens. We may see then that this Suspension of Hostilities

was

And cries—A while, ye Sons of *Argos* cease  
 From lawless Arms, nor violate the Peace.  
 To *Jove* and Kings alone the Right belongs  
 Of waging Battle, or avenging Wrongs. 560  
 Nor thou, young Warrior, of Redress despair,  
 Thy Welfare claims our seasonable Care.  
 Let us on *Tydeus* now our Thoughts employ,  
 Nor be less prone to save than to destroy.  
 His Limbs oppress'd with Toil and hostile Blows, 565  
 In speedy Sleep require a short Repose. }  
 Me too the same Desire of Vengeance warms,  
 But Reason moderates the Love of Arms.  
 His Wife and Friends enclose the weary Chief,  
 Anxious, and emulous to give Relief 570  
 While he, reclining on a Pillar, stood,  
 Joyful amidst his Toils and Loss of Blood.  
 Fam'd *Idmon* was at Hand to prove his Art,  
 And to the wounded Warrior Ease impart.  
 One while, the Juice of lenient Herbs he tries, 575  
 Then bathes the Wound, or crooked Knife applies.  
 While he relates at large, from whence arose  
 The Wrath and Ambush of his *Theban* Foes.  
 How, sent by Night, within the winding Way,  
 To bar his Passage, fifty Warriors lay. 580

was the Result of the most consummate Prudence, strict Piety, and patriotic Humanity

v. [69. *His Friends and Wife*] This heroic Behaviour of *Tydeus* is copied from that of *Aeneas* on a similar Occasion.

Stabat acerba fremens, ingentem nixus in hastam  
 Aeneas, magno Juvenum, et merentis Iuli  
 Contursu, lacrymisque immobilis.—

*Virgil's Aetid*, Lib. 12. Verse 398.

And, those defeated in the gloomy Vale,  
 He spar'd but one to bear the dreadful Tale.  
 Caught with the Sound of these heroic Deeds,  
 Each Chief, in Prospect, for his Country bleeds:  
 But *Polynices* most the Love of Fame, 585  
 And Thirst of Empire and Revenge inflame.  
 The Sun, descending from th' aerial Steep,  
 Had gain'd the Confines of the Western Deep,  
 And bath'd his Rays in the reflecting Flood;  
 His Coursers, panting on the Margin stood: 590  
 Till, swift emerging from their pearly Caves,  
 The Hours, and sea-green Daughters of the Waves  
 Releas'd them from the Yoke and hated Reins,  
 To range at Will, and crop the verdant Plains.  
 'Twas theirs his foaming Horses to unbrace, 595  
 And fix the Car on its immortal Base.  
 The Night succeeds, and wrapt in ambient Clouds,  
 In one huge Veil the whole Creation shrouds;  
 While Sleep consigns each anxious Breast to Peace,  
 And bids the Howlings of the Forest cease. 600

v. 591. *Till swift emergin'.*] This Circumstance of the Hours' attending on the Sun, is an Imitation of a Passage in the 8th Book of the *Iliad*, where those subaltera Deities are described as waiting on *Minerva*; but I think they are introduced with greater Propriety as Attendants on the Sun.

v. 597. *The Night succeeds.*] The best Description of Midnight I have ever met with is the following one of *Tasso*.

Bra la notte all' or, ch' alto riposo  
 Ha l' onde, e i venti, e pareo muto il mondo,  
 Gli animal lassi, e quei, che'l mar' ondosò,  
 O de liquidi laghi alberga il Fondo,  
 Echi si giace in Tana; ò in Mandra ascoso,  
 E i pinti Augelli nel' oblio profondo,  
 Sotto il silenzio de' secreti Orrori  
 Sopjan gli affanni, e raddolciano i cori.

*Gier. Lib. Can. 2.*

*Adrastus*, and the *Theban* Prince alone  
 The Want of Sleep, and inward Ease bemoan,  
 While *Tydeus* charg'd with visionary Spoils,  
 In Dreams re-acts his late illustrious Toils.  
 Mean while, involv'd in Shades of deepest Night, 605  
 The God of War renews his airy Flight.  
 His rattling Armour thunders o'er the Sky,  
 The subject Hills and Vales in Turns reply.  
 Wheree'er he moves, he kindles vengeful Fires,  
 And Love of War, and Thirst of Blood inspires. 610  
 Stern Wrath and Rage adjust his Coursers' Manes,  
 And Fear, array'd in Armor, guides the Reins.  
 Commission'd by the God, before the Car  
 Fame flies, and sounds aloud the Charge of War;  
 And, by the breathing Coursers wafted, springs 615  
 Aloft in Air, and shakes her clatt'ring Wings.  
 Oft premature, the watchful Goddess flies,  
 Feigns Things undone, and mingles Truth with Lies.  
 For *Mars*, and his impatient Charioteer  
 With Goads provoke her, and the *Scythian* Spear. 620

v. 605. *Mean while involv'd*] The Characteristic of *Statius*, as an heroic Poet, is an amazing Boldness in Imagery and Diction. To say he always reaches the pure Sublime, would be running counter to the Opinion of the best Critics, and consequently presumptuous and dogmatical. But to affirm he never does, would be equally unjust and unreasonable. The present Passage is of the mix'd Kind, and, at the same Time that it borders upon Fustian, is not wholly destitute of Sublimity. I will only add, that the most celebrated Instance of this Kind in *Homer* or *Virgil*, when reduced to the Standard of Reason, will seem a pleasing Extravagance, and elaborate Piece of Nonsense.

v. 617. *Oft premature*] So *Virgil*,

Tam fidei, pravique tenax, quam nuncia veri.

*Æn.* Book 4. Verse 188.

Thus, when dismiss'd from their *Æolian* Caves,  
 The Winds invade the calm *Ægean* Waves,  
 The Lord of Ocean follows; while around  
 The Tumult thickens, and the Deeps resound.  
 Then Storms and Show'rs collected from afar, 625  
 Enclose the God, and rage around his Car.  
 Scarce can the *Cyclades* the Shock sustain,  
 And *Delos*, fearing lest she float again,  
 Invokes the Pow'r, by whose auspicious Smiles  
 She stands connected with her Sister-Isles. 630  
 Now had the sev'nth *Aurora* chac'd the Night,  
 And deck'd the Courts of *Jove* with new-born Light,  
 When old *Adrastus* from his Couch arose,  
 And left his Chamber, satiate with Repose :  
 Revolving much within his lab'ring Breast 635  
 The future War, and Wrongs of either Guest :  
 And doubtful, whether to pollute the Peace,  
 And summon to his Aid the States of *Greece* ;  
 Or for a Season bid his Wrath subside,  
 And leave the Fortune of the War untry'd. 640  
 Much he debates : At Length resolves to prove  
 The Will of Heav'n, and ask Advice of *Jove*.  
 Peace was his Object, Peace his sole Delight,  
 While *Argos* with one Voice demands the Fight.

v. 630. *And Delos, fearing lest she float*] I know not where this Passage is better illustrated than in the following Lines of *Virgil*:

Sacra mari colitur medio gratissima tellus  
 Nereidum matri, et Neptuno *Ægeo*;  
 Quam pius Arcitenens oras, et littora circum  
 Errantem, Gyaro celsâ Myconoque revinxit,  
 Immotamque coli dedit, et contemnere ventos.

v. 673. *Now had the sev'nth Aurora*] Since *Tydeus* had returned from his Embassy to the Court of *Thebes*. Æn. 3. V. 73.

To the fam'd Son of *Oedipus*, skill'd to read 645  
 Each doubtful Omen, was the Charge decreed :  
 With him *Melampus* shares the Task assign'd,  
 Endu'd from Heav'n with a prophetic Mind.  
 Such was their Skill 'twas difficult to say  
 Which shone most honour'd by the God of Day, 650  
 Or in whose Draught a larger Portion flow'd  
 From *Cyrrha*, aidful to the Gift bestow'd.  
 The Victims fall, and first the Chiefs explore  
 The reeking Fibres, and o'erflowing Gore :  
 Their Hearts, with Spots o'erspread, Success deny'd,  
 And the Veins threaten'd on the hostile Side. 656  
 Not, thus discourag'd, did they yet despair,  
 But watch'd the wing'd Inhabitants of Air.  
 There stood a Mountain known to vulgar Fame,  
 Once sacred held, and *Apheusus* its Name; 660  
 Whose craggy Top the weary Clouds sustains,  
 And from afar o'erlooks the distant Plains.  
 Hence, Fame reports, young *Perseus* wing'd his Way,  
 And fought the Regions of eternal Day;

v. 651. *Or in whose Draught*] The Ancients had a Notion, that every one who had attained to any Degree of Skill in Divination, drank of this Stream, which was consecrated to *Apollo*. *Cyrrha* was a Mountain near *Pindus*, from which this celebrated Stream descended with great Rapidity.

v. 655. *Their Hearts*] The same Prognostics happened, when the Romans consulted the Gods concerning the Event of the Civil War between *Cæsar* and *Pompey*.

———— *Pallida tectis*  
*Viscera tincta notis, gelidoque infecta cruore,*  
*Plurimus asperso variabat sanguine livor.*  
*Cernit tabe jecur madidum: venasque minaces*  
*Hostili de parte videt.* *Lucan. Pharf. B. 1. V. 763.*



While *Danaë* survey'd with wild Affright 665  
 The bold Attempt, and scarce refrain'd from Flight.  
 Higher each anxious Scur retir'd in Haste,  
 With Olive-Leaves, and snow-white Chaplets grac'd;  
 What Time pale Winter flies the God of Day,  
 And Earth relenting feels the genial Ray. 670  
*Oedipus* first prefer'd his humble Pray'r:  
 O thou, whose Thunder rends the clouded Air,  
 Inspir'd by whom, each Vagrant of the Skies,  
 Fraught with Advice to wretched Mortals, flies;  
 Whose Wings the bold Enquirer's Fate disclose; 675  
 And warn him of succeeding Bliss or Woes.  
 Not *Cyrrha's* Cave with more unerring Skill,  
 Unfolds the King of Heav'n's eternal Will;  
 Nor the fam'd Oaks, from whence the dark Decrees  
 Of Fate are heard, low-whisper'd in the Breeze. 680  
*Ammon* to them must yield the Prophet's Bays,  
 And *Lycian* Lots resign their Share of Praise.

v. 666. *And scarce refrain'd from Flight*] The Poet has exhibited a very beautiful Image of motherly Affection in the Behaviour of *Danaë*. When she saw her Son attempting to fly, her Anxiety for his Safety was so great, that she almost resolv'd to spring from the Rock and follow him; and could hardly be induc'd to relinquish her Design, even after she had consider'd the Danger of the Attempt.

v. 677. *Not Cyrrha's Cave*] *Cyrrha* was a Town situated at the Foot of *Parnassus*, from whence the Oracle of *Apollo* was deliver'd.

v. 679. *Nor the fam'd Oaks*] The Oaks of this Place were said to be endowed with a Voice and prophetic Spirit. The Priests, who gave Answers, concealing themselves in those Trees, a Practice, which the pious Frauds of succeeding Ages have rendered not improbable.

v. 681. *Ammon to them must yield*] This famous Oracle was situated in *Lybia*; between the greater and less *Catabathmus*, to the West of *Egypt*, in what is now call'd the Desert of *Barca*. For a further and more particular Account, see *Lucan's Pharsalia*, Book 9.

No more let *Apis* cheat his servile Train,  
 Nor *Branchus* honour'd with a *Lybian* Fane,  
 No more *Arcadia's* trembling Swains adore 685  
 The Shades of *Pan*, or his Advice implore.  
 More skill'd is he, to whom propitious *Jove*  
 Declares his Will in Omens from above.  
 From whence, or when this Honour sprung, is known  
 To thee, the sole omniscient Cause, alone : 690  
 Dark and obscure its Origin remains,  
 And still deludes the vain Enquirer's Pains.  
 But, whether Nature did this Task impose,  
 When at her Word the whole Creation rose ;  
 Whether, once Men, they trod some hostile Plain, 695  
 And in the Form of Birds reviv'd again ;  
 Or their great Distance from the World below,  
 And purer Air this useful Art bestow :

v. 683. *No more let Apis*] *Apis* was an Egyptian Deity, worshipped in the Shape of a Bull.

v. 684. *Nor Branchus*] The common Report is, that *Branchus* was a *Theſſalian* Youth belov'd by *Apollo*; in whose Honour the God commanded a Temple to be erected, and Sacrifices to be offered.

v. 685. *No more Arcadia's*] The divine Honours that were paid to *Pan* in *Arcadia*, are known to every one who is vers'd in the Classics; nay, their Partiality was so great as to prefer him before all the other Deities. Hence *Virgil* says;

*Pan etiam, Arcadiâ mecum si iudice certet,  
 Pan etiam, Arcadiâ se victum iudice dicat.*

*Eclogue 5. Verse 58.*

v. 695. *Whether once Men*] The Doctrine of the *Metempsychosis* was founded upon a Supposition, that the Souls of the Deceased passed from one Body to another. *Pythagoras* was Author of this Set of Philosophers, affirming that his Soul entered into the Bodies of five different Animals; and that he was first *Euphorbus*, 2d *Pythagoras*, 3d A Peacock, 4th *Homer*, and 5th *Ennius* the Roman Poet.

May some unerring previous Signs declare  
 Our Fate and Fortune in the dubious War. 700  
 If captive *Thebes*, her Host and Walls o'erthrown,  
 The lawful Heir, her rightful Lord shall own.  
 Let fav'ring Thunders shake the distant Spheres,  
 And Birds with Voice auspicious strike our Ears:  
 But, if the Gods averse reject our Vows, 705  
 And the proud Tyrant's wrongful Cause espouse,  
 Withhold those Signs: And may the plummy Race  
 In num'rous Flocks obscure th' aerial Space.  
 Thus spoke the Sage: And on the Rock reclin'd,  
 To the same Office other Gods assign'd. 710  
 From thence he views a gath'ring Mist arise,  
 Ravish the Day, and blacken all the Skies.  
 But when they had (by old Example taught)  
 Fresh Omens from the Stars and Æther sought;  
*Melampus* cries: No fav'ring Birds of Prey, 715  
 Nor tuneful Songsters wing their airy Way,  
 Float on the Wind, or emulously strain  
 Their liquid Throats, and cleave th' ethereal Plain.  
 No jetty Raven, from *Apollo* sent,  
 Nor Owl from *Pallas* favours our Intent; 720  
 Nor dexter Eagle, stooping from above,  
 Proclaims our Int'rest with his Master *Jove*.  
 Yet see, what Legions, gath'ring from afar  
 In Quest of Prey, await the future War!

v. 703. *Let fav'ring Thunders*] The Heathens, among many other superstitious Notions, had this in particular; that Thunder coming from the Left portended the Favour of the Gods to those who saw it. Hence *Virgil*:

Vix ea fatus erat senior, subitoque fragore  
 Intosuit laevum. Æneid, Lib. 2. Verse 692.

Here quiv'ring Hawks, and hungry Vultures fly, 725  
 And cloud with spreading Wings th' obstructed Sky.  
 There horrid Screech-Owls with portending Flight,  
 And Screaming's dire prophane the hallow'd Light.  
 What then remains? — Shall these Portents prevail,  
 And Peace or War incline the doubtful Scale? 730  
 Canst thou, O Source of Light, unmov'd, survey  
 Thy Rays obscur'd, and violated Day?  
 While thus he spake: A sudden Tumult springs  
 From clashing Talons, and obstructed Wings:  
 They clap their Pinions, and with frantic Rage 735  
 Strike their own Breasts; and with themselves engage.  
 The Chief subjoins:—Oft have these Eyes beheld  
 Dire Omens, and my Skill the Cause reveal'd:  
 Yet never felt I this Excess of Fear,  
 Or did the Stars more ominous appear; 740  
 Not even when I sought the Colchian Shore,  
 With Kings and Demi-gods in Days of Yore.  
 To what I urg'd they listen'd and obey'd,  
 And Fate confirm'd whate'er *Melampus* said:  
 Nor was the Son of *Phabus* sooner heard 745  
 Than I, or his Advice to mine preferr'd.  
 But see, still greater Prodigies await,  
 And free from further Doubt the Will of Fate.

v. 727. *There horrid Screech-Owls*] The above-quoted Author says,  
 Solaque culminibus ferali carmine Bubo  
 Saepè queri, et longas in sictum ducere Voces.

Book 4. V. 464.

v. 747. *But see, still greater Prodigies*] *Stattus* has excelled his two  
 poetical Predecessors *Homer* and *Virgil* in the Choice of an Omen;  
 and in the Application of it to the Thing portended, in a very emi-  
 nent Degree. By premising this Observation, I have unluckily  
 awakened the Reader's Attention, and drawn myself into an indis-  
 pensible Necessity of giving my Opinion of this Part in general.

Unnumber'd Swans, collected from afar,  
 In one firm Body wedg'd, expect the War: 750  
 Whether stern *Boreas* hither urg'd their Course,  
 Or *Nile* o'erflows its Banks from ev'ry Source.  
 The *Thebans* these, who shun the deathful Field,  
 And hold their Walls before them as a Shield.  
 But see, exulting with the Hopes of Prey, 755  
 A Troop of Eagles hither wing their Way.  
 These are th' *Inashian* Chiefs, who seek Renown  
 From captive *Thebes*, and threat the guilty Town.  
 With open Beaks, and levell'd Claws they spring,  
 And all the War descends upon the Wing. 760  
 Beneath each Blow a snowy Warrior dies,  
 And Show'rs of Blood and Feathers quit the Skies.  
 Yet see, the Victors triumph but to fall;  
 And *Jove* descends, alike severe to all.  
 This, proudly soaring thro' forbidden Ways, 765  
 Is burnt with scorching *Sol's* avenging Rays.  
 That, daring with superior Strength engage,  
 Falls the just Victim of united Rage.

To say any Thing of Augury, farther than it concerns the present Subject of our Observation, would be entirely needless, as the Reader may find it described at large in *Kamru* and *Potter*. I shall only remark therefore, that out of a very dry Subject, *Statius* has made an entertaining and agreeable Narration. The different Deaths of the six Heroes combined against *Thebes*, are finely imagined in those of the six Eagles. But, as the Propriety of the Application cannot be so well illustrated without a previous Comparison, I shall defer doing it till it occurs in the Course of Observation. The Open described by *Virgil* is in the 11th Book of the *Aeneid*; and that of *Homer* in the 12th of the *Iliad*.

v. 765. *This, proudly soaring*] This was *Capaneus*, who was thunder-struck for attempting to scale the Walls of *Thebes*, in Defiance of *Jupiter*.

v. 767. *That, daring with superior Strength*] The Hero here figur'd was *Parthenopæus*, who fell in a Duel with *Dryas*, a Chief of enormous Size, and distinguished Strength.

Here one, entangled with his Foe, expires:

This, safe in Flight alone, from War retires. 770

Another Chief, o'erwhelm'd with Numbers, lies,

And with his sprinkled Blood pollutes the Skies.

This, tho' he scarce retains the vital Breath,

Preys on his Foe, and triumphs e'en in Death.

But whence those secret Tears, that stifled Groan? 775

Too well, alas! the fatal Cause is known.

Thus shook the trembling Chiefs beneath the Weight

Of imag'd Mischiefs, and portended Fate.

Great was their Grief while yet it lay conceal'd,

But greater when their Fortune was reveal'd. 780

v. 769. *Here one, entangled*] This was *Polynices*, who fell encountering with his Brother.

v. 770. *This safe in Flight*] *Adrastus* is alluded to here, who returned safe home to *Argos*.

v. 771. *Another Chief, o'erwhelm'd*] *Hippomedon* was drowned in the River *Ismenos*, in the Pursuit of his Enemies.

v. 773. *This, tho' he scarce retains*] The Poet here alludes to *Tydeus*, who, in the very Pangs of Death is represented as gnawing the Head of his Enemy.

v. 775. *But whence those secret Tears*] This is the most beautiful Stroke in the pathetic Way that I ever met with in the Course of my Reading. When *Melampus*, who had been describing the different Fates of the seven Heroes from those of the seven Eagles, had come to that of *Amphiaraus*, then present, instead of pursuing the Application, he burst into Tears. His Friend observed him, and being conscious of the Cause, chides him for endeavouring to hide it. I must own I was very anxious, and unable to guess how the Poet would extricate himself from this Embarrassment; but was agreeably surprised to find, that he had not only cleared himself with Reputation, but made it one of the most beautiful Passages in the whole Work. This alone might be a Confutation of that false Criticism which some have fallen into, who affirm, that a Poet ought only to connect the great and noble Particulars in his Paintings. But it is in the Images of Things, as in the Characters of Persons; where a small Action, or even a small Circumstance of an Action, lets us more into the Knowledge and Comprehension of

From whence, ye Gods! does this Impatience grow  
 Of prying into what we fear to know?  
 Since Prescience doubles future Miseries,  
 Till small Ills swell to a gigantic Size:  
 We deem as certain what's a doubtful Doom, 785  
 And feel th' Effects before the Cause is come;  
 To learn, perhaps, how many Years remain  
 Of Life, or what the Fates and *Jove* ordain.  
 Nor are these Seeds of Grief and Sorrow known  
 From *Plabe*, Fibres, Birds, or Stars alone: 790  
 But Mysteries of Magic are explor'd,  
 And breathless Carcases to Life restor'd.  
 Yet were these Arts unknown in Days of old,  
 When Time was seen to fly on Wings of Gold.  
 The Gods reserv'd them for this impious Age, 795  
 When Conscience threatens their impending Rage.  
 Our virtuous Sires confin'd their harmless Toil  
 To thin the Woods or break the stubborn Soil.  
 The Depths of Fate involv'd in Errors lie,  
 Impervious, and remote from mortal Eye: 800

them, than the material Parts themselves. *Plutarch* has sufficiently proved this, in his Apology for relating the Anecdote of *Agamemnon's* riding upon a long Pole to please his Children. Nor is this found in a History only, but in a Picture likewise; where sometimes a small Motion or Turn of a Finger will express the Character and Action of the Figure more than all the other Parts of the Design.

v. 781. *From whence, ye Gods?*] It has been observed by some Critics, that these Philosophical Enquiries; and Moral Reflections are very un-epic, and allowable only in Dramatic Poetry. The Authors of this Observation have Reason on their Side, and I am glad *Statius* is so seldom blameable on this Head. *Lucan* is continually splitting upon this Rock; but he is more excusable than an Epic Poet, since the chief Objection made to it is, that it breaks off the Connection requisite in the Epopœia, and retards the Catastrophe or Solution of the Epic Knot.

Those only, who have forfeited his Love,  
 Explore the Counsels of Almighty Jove.  
 Hence Falshood, Discontent, and impious Rage,  
 Hence ev'ry Vice that stains the present Age.  
 Meanwhile *Ocridas* from his Temple reads 805  
 The sacred Crown, and from the Mount descends :  
 He hears the clanging Trumpets from afar,  
 And all the Tumult of approaching War.  
 Nor, when he reach'd the Town, did he resort  
 Among the Croud, or mingle with the Court ; 810  
 But, lurking in a darksome, lonely Cell,  
 Suppress'd in Silence what he fear'd to tell.  
*Melampus* Shame and private Cares detain  
 Where *Pan* and *Ceres* share an equal Reign.  
 Twelve Days he loiter'd on the woody Coast, 815  
 Then told the imag'd Fate of either Host.  
 The God of Battles, eager to perform  
 His Sire's Commands, and raise the bloody Storm,  
 Depopulates the Towns, explores the Plains,  
 And from their Toils diverts the willing Swains. 820  
 Headlong they rush, impatient for the Fray,  
 Nor pleading Nature gains a short Delay ;  
 Nor weeping Wives their Husbands could withhold,  
 Such was the Love of War, and *Theban* Gold.  
 No more their Halls, bereft of hostile Spoils, 825  
 Bear Witness of their Sire's victorious Toils.

v. 825. *No more their Halls*] The Reader may be willing, perhaps, to compare this with the following Passage of *Virgil*.

Ardet inexcita Ausonia atque immobilis ante.  
 Pars, leves clypeos, et spicula lucida tergun  
 Arvina pingui, subiguntque in cote secures ;  
 Tegmina tuta cavant capitum, flectuntque salignas  
 Umbonum crates : Alii thoracas ahenos,



Een, unconsenting, *Jove* himself resigns  
 The Chariots that adorn'd his awful Shrines.  
 They scour the rusty Javelin, Form impart  
 To mutilated Swords, and point the Dart. 830  
 Some grace with Adamant their glowing Breasts,  
 Or fit their brighten'd Helms with waving Crests;  
 While others bend with Care the *Cretan* Bow,  
 And train their Steeds to charge or shun the Foe.  
 Inverted Ploughs, and Scythes new-temper'd wear 835  
 Another Form, and with fresh Lustre glare.  
 For Spears each sacred Grove its Branches yields,  
 And Oxen bleed to cloath the burnish'd Shields.  
 They deluge *Argos*, and in Crouds resort  
 To force their Monarch, and insult the Court. 840  
 War is their Wish and Arms the gen'ral Cry;  
 Arms in Return the vaulted Roofs reply.  
 Loud as the Surge, or bellowing *Ætna* roars,  
 When the stern Giant shakes the neighb'ring Shores;  
 A burning Deluge issues from above. 845  
 And hurls its Anger on the Courts of *Jove*.

Aut leves ocreas lentis ducunt argenteo.  
 Vomeris huc et falcis honos, huc omnis aratri  
 Cessit amor: Recoquant patrios fornacibus enses:

*JEn.* 7. V. 532.

And with this of *Lucan*:

Supta quidam Populi, stratisque excita juvenus  
 Diripiunt sacris affixa penatibus arma,  
 Quæ Pax longa dabat, nudâ jam crate fluentes  
 Invadant clypeos, curvataque cuspidè pila,  
 Et scabros ingratæ morsû Rubiginis enses. *Pharf. Lib. 1.*

*v. 843. Loud as the Surge*] The above quoted Author has made Use of this Comparison.

Non sic *Ætneis* habitans in vallibus horret  
 Bucceladus spirante noto, cum tota cavernas  
 Egerit, et torrens in campos defluit *Ætna*.

Lib. 6.  
 The

The Swain with Horror eyes the less'ning Main,  
 And the cleft Mountain seems to join again.  
 But *Capaneus*, the vaunted Pride of *Greece*,  
 Sighs for Revenge, and loaths the short-liv'd Peace.  
 Such was his Stature, *Jove's* enormous Foes, 851  
 Nor *Etna's* Sons in Height superior rose :  
 And such his Might, the Splendors of his Birth  
 Were darkned by his own intrinsic Worth.  
 Yet he contemn'd the Gods, nor knew to stay, 855,  
 Where Vengeance or Ambition led the Way ;  
 But, prodigal of Life, whene'er withstood,  
 Oft gave his own to spill another's Blood.  
 Before the Prophet's Gate, amidst a Croud  
 Of mingled Ranks, he thus exclaims aloud. 860  
 Say, ye bold Candidates for warlike Praise,  
 From whence these abject Fears, and vain Delays ?  
 What Joy to boasting *Thebes* ! What lasting Shame,  
 That *Argos*, heedless of her former Fame,  
 Dares not thro' pious Awe unsheath the Sword,  
 Till juggling Priests and Prophets give the Word !

v. 849. *But Capaneus*] The Character of *Capaneus* is poetically good, and makes a considerable Figure in the *Thebaid*. But if we look upon it in a moral Light : We shall find it an Assemblage of the brightest Virtues and blackest Vices ; and they are both so blended together, that we can neither praise or disapprove either, without an Opposition from the contrary Quality. He has Valour in a great Degree, but it is intermixed with Rashness. His Constancy renders him impious and his Friendship, barbarous. In short, this Character is built on the same Plan, as the *Mezentius* of Virgil, and *Argante* of Tasso : Yet he has more Courage than the former, and more Impiety than the latter of these Heroes.

v. 859. *But prodigal of Life*] Tasso makes the same Observation of *Argante*.

E la vendetta far tanto disia.  
 Che sprezza i rischi, e le difese oblia.

Canto 6. St. 45.

Should *Sol* himself, whom heartless Slaves adore,  
 And Fame reports a God, exhaust his Store  
 Of Prodigies, and scare our *Argive* Train;  
 By all deserted, would I seek the Plain. 870  
 This Arm and Weapon Aid alone afford;  
 These are the Gods by *Capaneus* ador'd.  
 But should this Dastard-Seer refuse to join  
 In Combat; nor his fraudulent Arts resign;  
 My Javelin can revenge so base a Part, 875  
 And free the Soul that quivers in his Heart.  
 Shouts of Acclaim the list'ning Vulgar raise,  
 And Voice to Voice resounds the Warrior's Praise.  
 At length *Amphiaras* his Silence broke,  
 And, rushing from his Cavern, thus he spoke. 880  
 From whence these Vaunts, this impious Waste of Breath?  
 'Tis not from mortal Arms I fear my Death:  
 Nor sought I Shelter here from destin'd Fight,  
 Nor did thy Threats restore me to the Light.  
 Another Fate o'erhangs my guiltless Head, 885  
 And *Jove* shall rank me with the num'rous Dead.  
 Inspiring *Phæbus*, and a Patriot's Cares  
 Have urg'd me to reveal what Fate prepares.  
 Hear then, nor let in vain the God disclose;  
 But learn, advis'd, to shun impending Woes. 890  
 From thee, alone, the slighted God witholds  
 His Oracles, nor hast'ning Fate unfolds.

v. 871. *This Arm and Weapon*] This is copied from the blasphemous Invocation of *Mexentius*.

Dextra mihi Deus, et Telum quod missile libro  
 Nunc adiunt. —————

*Æneid. Lib. 10. Verse 773.*

But say, by what malicious Furies driv'n,  
 You take up Arms, as in Contempt of Heav'n?  
 Is Life insipid, *Argos* hateful grown, 896  
 And *Mars* of all the Gods ador'd alone?  
 Can Home no more attractive Joys afford,  
 And shall these Omens be in vain explor'd?  
 Ah! what avails it to have read the Skies,  
 And watch'd the Course of ev'ry Bird that flies? 900  
 Far better had the kindly God conceal'd  
 The fatal Horrors of the *Theban* Field,  
 Ye sacred Mysteries deriv'd from *Jove*!  
 Ye wing'd Inhabitants of Heav'n above!  
 And thou, whose guiding Influence I feel, 906  
 Be Witness to the Truths I now reveal  
 In the blue Vault, as in a Volume spread,  
 Plain might the *Argive* Destiny be read,  
 The weary Sisters flag, and scarcely wield  
 The fatal Sheers, such Carnage hides the Field. 910  
 Dismiss your Arms, resign your impious Rage,  
 Nor rashly thus, with Fates averse, engage,  
 May Fibres err, and Omens threat in vain;  
 Nor *Argive* Blood enrich the *Theban* Plain.  
 But let us go:—Our Ruin is decreed, 916  
 And *Thebes* and *Argos* fatally must bleed.  
 Thus far the Chief: a rising groan suppress,  
 And in eternal Darkness veil'd the rest.  
 When *Capaneus*.—Fly, Son of *Oecleus*, fly,  
 Thy Aid we need not, and thy Threats defy: 920

v. 919. *When Capaneus*] This Speech of *Capaneus* has a great deal of Spirit, Humour and Sarcasm; and lets us more into the Character of its Author, than any hitherto has done. He is a Person that cannot hearken to Reason, unless agreeable to his own Inclinations;

Secure thyself in Flight ; nor here suggest  
 Fears like thy own to ev'ry Soldier's Breast.  
 May Birds and Fibres still thy Care employ,  
 And Ease and homely Pleasures be thy Joy.  
 Yet unreveng'd shall valiant *Tydeus* bleed, 925  
 And *Thebes* in Peace applaud the guilty Deed ?  
 Do thou assert the Royal Exile's Cause,  
 And prove the Force of hospitable Laws .  
 Those Ensigns of *Apollo* will retard  
 Each hostile Stroke, and claim a due Regard. 930  
 Does Nature, subjected to Magic Laws,  
 Disclose to Light each dark, mysterious Cause ?  
 How easy are your Gods, if Pray'rs can move,  
 And gain Admission to the Courts of *Jove* !  
 Fear made them first: But whence this fond Delight 935  
 To scatter Terrors, and retard the Fight ?  
 Hence while thou may'st ; nor, when the Morning's Beam  
 Shall strike upon our Arms at *Dirce's* Stream,  
 Presume our Rage, and Thirst of War to stay ;  
 Remember this our Counsel, and obey : 940  
 Lest *Phœbus* mourn his helpless Prophet slain,  
 And Ensigns scatter'd on the *Theban* Plain,  
 There *Capaneus* shall act an Angur's Part,  
 And rage amidst his Foes with lifted Dart.  
 Again loud Peals of Acclamation rise 945  
 From ev'ry Mouth, and thunder to the Skies."

nations ; and his Prejudice carries him so far as to make him laugh at the noblest Arts, and even the Gods themselves, only because they are Obstructions to his Desire of waging War with *Thebes*. The Effects of his Oration are such as we may see every Day in common Life ; where the Aggressor frequently has the Laugh, tho' his Antagonist has perhaps Reason on his Side.

As when a Torrent swollen with vernal Rains,  
 And melting Snows invades the subject Plains,  
 Thro' ruin'd Moles the Victor-Wave resounds,  
 O'erwhelms the Bridge, and bursts the lofty Mounds;  
 Cots, Herds, and trembling Swains are borne away,  
 And hurried on with unresisted Sway;  
 Till, bounded by some Hill, it shifts its Course,  
 And, rushing backward, seeks its distant Source.

v. 947. *As when a Torrent.*] It is doubtful whether this Comparison is to be applied to the Noise of the shouting *Argives*, or to the closing of the Dispute by the Interposition of Night; as the Poet might say with equal Propriety, that the Shouts of the Army were as loud as the Noise of a rushing Torrent; or that Night closed the Debate in the same Manner as an Eminence stops the Course of an Inundation. The Reader therefore must please his own Fancy, and apply it where he thinks it most applicable. I believe it will not be disagreeable to see how other Poets have acquitted themselves on this Subject. The Reader may judge between them.

Θυγὲν γὰρ ἀμπύλοισι ποταμῶν πλαθόντι ὠκεῶς  
 Χεῖμαρρον, ὅς τ' ὠκεῖα μὲν ἐκιδέσκει γέφυρας·  
 Τὸ δ' ὅτ' ἀπ' τοῦ γέφυρας ἐκζεῖται καὶ ὠκεῖον αὖτις,  
 Οὐτ' ἀπ' ὠκεῖα ὠκεῖα ἀλλὰ μὲν ἐκιδέσκει,  
 ἔλθοντ' ἐκ πύργου ὅτ' ἐκιδέσκει Διὸς οὐρα,  
 Πολλὰ δ' ὅτ' αὖτις ἐκζεῖται καὶ ὠκεῖον αὖτις.

*Iliad. Lib. 5.*

Non sic aggeribus ruptis cum spumeus amnis  
 Exiit, oppositasque evicit gurgite moles,  
 Fertur in arva furens cumulo, camposque per omnes  
 Cum stabulis Armenta trahit.—

*Æneid. Lib. 3.*

Sic pleno Padus ore tumens super aggere tutas  
 Excurrit ripas, et totos concutit agros.  
 Succubuit si qua tellus, cumulumque furentem  
 Undarum non Passura ruit: tum flumine toto  
 Transfit, et ignotos aperit sibi Gurgite campos.  
 Illos terra fugit dominos: his rura Colonis  
 Accedunt, donante Pado.—

*Lucan. Phar. B. 6. V. 276.*

They are all four extremely beautiful, and have their Admirers and, unless I err very much in Point of Judgment, They do not appear here to the Disadvantage of *Statius*.

Mean while ~~the Sun~~ to Western Deep's retir'd 955  
 And with his ~~Light~~ the stern Debate expir'd.  
 But fair ~~Argis~~, steep'd in Sorrows shares  
 A more than half of all her Husband's Cares.  
 Impatient to divulge her Grief, she rose,  
 And sought the Royal Mansions of Repose. 960  
 Abandon'd to the Wind her Tresses fly;  
 Grief pall'd her Cheeks, and dull'd her sparkling Eye.  
*Thessander* in her soft Embraces press'd,  
 (Her only Hope) hung smiling at her Breast.  
 What Time the Bear, of all the starry Train 965  
 Alone surviving, thuns the Western Main,  
 She reach'd her Sire, and on his Knees reclin'd,  
 Thus vents the secret Purpose of her Mind.  
 Of what Avail are Words to you, who know  
 The Source and Origin of all my Woe? 970  
 Say, is it doubted, why I bend my Course  
 To you, my Sire, my Friend; my sole Resource?  
 Yet Heav'n attest, the silent Lamp of Night,  
 And Stars alone were conscious of my Flight:  
 Alas! nor Ease, nor Quiet have I known, 975  
 (But shar'd in Grief and Sorrows not my own,)  
 Since *Hymen's* Tapers shone at your Command,  
 And this young Prince receiv'd my plighted Hand.

v. 965. *What Time the Bear, &c.*] *Statius* is guilty of the same  
 Astronomical Mistake, as his two Predecessors *Homer* and *Virgil*;  
 who both in their Verses represent the Bear as the only Constellation  
 which never bathed itself in the Ocean, that is to say, that did not  
 set, and was always visible; whereas this is common to other Con-  
 stellations of the Arctic Circle; as, the lesser Bear, the Dragon,  
 the greatest Part of *Cepheus*, &c. For my Part I esteem this Mistake  
 of so little Consequence in a Poet, that I shall not trouble the  
 Reader with a Vindication, but refer him to that of *Homer*, by *Mrs.*  
*Pope*. See Note on Verse 566 of the 18th Book of the *Iliad*.

Pangs keen as those which break my nightly Rest,  
 Might pierce a Rock, or Tyger's ruthless Breast. 980  
 Now on the Verge of endless Woe I stand,  
 And own no Help but from thy saving Hand :  
 Assent to War, nor let thy Son bemoan  
 The ravish'd Empire due to him alone.  
 But, if these Tears thy Pity fail to move, 985  
 Regard this Infant-Pledge of mutual Love.  
 How will his Foes deride his lowly Birth,  
 And make his Woes the Object of their Mirth !  
 Yet was his Sire the Prince, who (*Phabus* said)  
 Shou'd share thy Sceptre, and *Argia's* Bed. 990  
 Nor was I led astray by Love's Delights,  
 Or lawless *Hymen* present at the Rites ;  
 But mindful e'er of what thou didst enjoin,  
 I taught my Heart to know no Choice but thine.  
 Say, can I freeze, when he for Vengeance glows, 995  
 Or wish to smile, exempt from social Woes ?  
 The Fears and Cares of Love, alas ! are known  
 To those, whom Fortune dooms to feel, alone.  
 Yet such the Object of this harsh Request,  
 I dread the Grant, and what I ask, detest : 1000

v. 987. *How will his Foes*] As being the Son of an Exile.

The Poet in this Oration does not seem to have thoroughly entered into the Spirit of the Cause, or kept the Motives to this Address sufficiently in his Eye: At least I should have been inclined to have put another Construction on it, and to have concluded it rather the Effect of Pride and Ambition, than of Disinterestedness and Humanity, if I had not recollected that *Argia* was put to Death by *Creon*, for burying her Husband contrary to Orders. The Motives she alledges seem to be a meer Feint; and indeed it is improbable that a tender Wife and affectionate Daughter should desire her Husband and Father to hazard their Lives for a petty Sovereignty, when the former of these Relations was Heir to a much larger, as *Polynices* was to *Adrastus*.



BOOK III. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 131

And, when the Trumpet sounds the last Adieu,  
And the dear Object lessens to my View ;  
I yet may wish, but then must wish in vain,  
The circling Moments could revolve again.  
The Monarch, rising, on her Cheeks imprest 1005  
A tender Kiss, and thus the Fair address.  
Dismiss thy Fears : E'en Envy must approve  
Thy just Petition, and Excess of Love.  
The threat'ning Gods my lab'ring Breast divide,  
And bid each Impulse of Revenge subside. 1010  
Yet fair *Argia* shall not sue in vain,  
Nor her brave Spouse without Redress complain.  
Be this his Solace, that this short Delay  
Tends to secure the Fortune of the Fray.  
The pausing Monarch from his Couch arose, 1015  
And quits the silent Mansions of Repose ;  
For now *Aurora*, clad in Eastern Spoils,  
Renews at once the Light, and mortal Toils. 1020

F I N I S.



**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE FOURTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

**A**DRASTUS having given his Consent to the War, the Allied Army is drawn up in Form of Battle. They begin their March to Thebes. Eriphyle, by the Acceptance of a Present from Argos, lays her Husband under an Obligation of joining the Confederates. Parthenopæus elopes during his Mother's Absence, and heads the Arcadian Troops. She follows him, but to no Effect. The Priestess of Bacchus, inspired with a Spirit of Divination, runs up and down the City, and foretells the Death of the two Theban Princes, with the Usurpation of the Kingdom by Creon. Several Prodigies happen. At length, Eteocles, alarm'd at the Invasion of his Territories, consults with Tiresias the Prophet, concerning the Fate of the War. They go through a Course of Necromancy, and conjure up the Spirit of Laius, whose ambiguous Answer determines them to oppose the Invaders in a hostile Manner. Bacchus in his Return from Thrace, meets the Argives in their Route to Thebes. He leads them out of their Way, and persuades the Nymphs to dry up all the Rivers and Fountains under their Care. The Allies, half dead with Thirst, are met by a Lemnian Princess, who informs them of the River Langia and conducts them thither. They offer up a Prayer to the tutelary Genius of the River, which concludes the Book.

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE FOURTH.

**T**HRICE had *Hyperion* either Tropic view'd,  
 The Winter banish'd, and the Spring renew'd ;  
 When now the sprightly Trumpet from afar  
 Gave the dread Signal of approaching War.  
 When fierce *Bellona*, sent by *Jove's* Command, 5  
 (The Torch of Discord blazing in her Hand)  
 Bar'd her red Arm from fair *Larissa's* Height,  
 And whirl'd her Spear, a Prelude to the Fight.  
 Whizzing it cleaves the Skies : near *Dirce's* Source  
 A rising Hillock bounds its furious Course, 10  
 Thence to the glitt'ring Camp the Goddess flies,  
 And darts from Rank to Rank her ardent Eyes:  
 She strokes the Steeds, and arms the Warrior's Hands,  
 The truly Brave prevent her stern Commands,  
 And e'en the Coward loaths the Thought of Flight, 15  
 And feels a short liv'd Ardor for the Fight.  
 The destin'd Day serenely shone above,  
 And first a Victim falls to *Mars* and *Jove*.  
 The trembling Priest a chearful Aspect wears,  
 Nor to th' enquiring Troops imparts his Fears. 20

The Poet has exerted himself in a very eminent Degree at the Opening of this Book. He awakens the Reader's Curiosity, and sounds an Alarm to the approaching Conflict. The Influence of Discord over the brave Man and the Coward is finely distinguished, and contributes to heighten the Majesty of this Description.

Mean while their Friends indulge a parting View,  
 And press around to share the last Adieu.  
 No Bounds the gushing Stream of Sorrow knows ;  
 From Rank to Rank the soft Contagion grows :  
 Each pregnant Eye unwonted Currents pours, 25  
 Their Bucklers intercept the falling Show'rs.  
 Some through their Helms a fervent Kiss impart,  
 And Nature triumphs o'er each soften'd Heart.  
 No more the Thirst of War and Vengeance burns,  
 But exil'd Tenderness in all returns. 30  
 Thus when, the Storm appeas'd, a rising Breeze  
 Invites the Mariner to tempt the Seas,  
 Their weeping Friends the parting Crew detain,  
 And for a while subsides the Love of Gain.  
 With streaming Eyes, and Hand fast lock'd in Hand,  
 They put off Fate, and linger on the Strand. 36  
 But, when the Vessel cleaves the yielding Deep,  
 The Mourners posted on some neighb'ring Steep,  
 With eager Eyes pursue the less'ning Sails,  
 And curse the driving Impulse of the Gales. 40  
 Assist, O Fame, in whose immortal Page  
 The glorious Toils of ev'ry distant Age

v. 41. *Assist, O Fame*] It is hard to conceive any Address more solemn, any Opening to a Subject more noble and magnificent than this Invocation. The Hint of it is taken from *Homer*, though the Invocation itself is varied, as may be seen from comparing them together.

"ἔσπετο ὅτι μοι μέσση ἰλὺμπια δόματ' ἔχουσι  
 (Υμῶς γὰρ διαίεσι, παρτί τι, ἱεὶ τι πάντα,  
 Ἡμῶς δὲ κλέϑ' οἷον αἰκόμεν κδὲ τι ἴδμεν.)  
 Οἵτινες ἡγεμόνεις, Δαναῶν, καὶ Κεῖρανοι ἦσαν.  
 Πληθὺν δ' ὅκ' αἶν' ἐγὼ μεθήσομαι, ἅδ' εἰορμένα,  
 Οἷδ' αἶμαι δίκαια μὲν γλῶσσαι, δίκαια δὲ στόματ' αἶν.  
 Θανὴ δ' ἄρρεσσι, χαλκίοι δὲ μοι ἦτορ ἱναίη,

Recorded shine ; to whose all-seeing Eyes  
 Nor Heav'n, or Earth, or Hell impervious lies.  
 And thou, *Calliope*, deriv'd from *Jove*,  
 Whose Music warbles in th' *Aonian* Grove,  
 From whom alone heroic Ardor springs, 45  
 Be present, and awake the trembling Strings :  
 Relate, what Chiefs, in quest of warlike Fame,  
 And fir'd by *Mars*, to aid *Adrastus* came. 50  
 Surcharg'd with Troubles, and a Length of Years,  
 Encircled by his Host, the King appears.  
 A Sword alone for Ornament he wore,  
 His Slaves behind the pond'rous Armor bore.  
 Beneath the Gate his fiery Coursers stand ; 55  
 And, while the Groom divides with artful Hand  
 His flowing Mane, reluctant to the Car  
*Arion* bounds, and hopes the promis'd War.

Εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδης μῦσας, Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο  
 Θυγατέρας, μνησαίανθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλίοι κλῆσαν.

*Virgil* has imitated it, but with little Success.

Pandite nunc Heliconæ, Deæ, cantusque movete :  
 Qui bello exciti reges : quæ quemque secutæ  
 Complerint campos acies ; quibus Itala jam tum  
 Floruerit terra alma viris, quibus arserit armis.  
 Et meministis enim, Divæ, et memorare potestis :  
 Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aura. Æn. 7. V. 64.

And *Tasso* with some Improvement.

Mente de gli anni, e del' oblio nemica,  
 Delle cose custode, e dispensiera,  
 Vaglia mi tua ragionsi, ch'io ridica  
 Di quel Campo ogni Duce, ed ogni schiera.  
 Suoni, e risplenda la lor fama antica,  
 Fatta dagli anni omai tacita, e nera :  
 Tolto da' tuoi tesori orni mia lingua  
 Cio, ch' ascolti ogni età, nulla l'estingua. G. C. 1. St. 36.

For him *Larissa* arms her martial Pow'rs,  
 And fair *Prosymna* grac'd with rising Tow'rs. .60  
 To these the Youth of *Midea* succeed,  
 And *Phyllos*, famous for her fleecy Breed;  
 Then fair *Cleone* sends a valiant Train,  
 And lowly *Neris*, o'er whose fertile Plain  
 The swift *Charadros* rolls his rapid Flood, 65  
 And *Tbyre*, doom'd to float in *Spartan* Blood.  
 From *Drepanos*, for snowy Cliffs renown'd,  
 And *Sicyon*, with Groves of Olives crown'd,  
 A Troop of grateful Warriors bend their Way,  
 Where once *Adrastus* held the regal Sway, 70  
 Where slow *Langia* bathes the silent Shores,  
 And, winding in his Course, *Elissos* roars.  
 Here oft repair from *Pluto's* gloomy Courts  
 The Sister-Furies (ancient Fame reports)  
 While, bending o'er the Brink, the Serpents flake 75  
 Their Thirst, and of the grateful Stream partake.

v. 59. *For him Larissa, &c.*] I think myself obliged to make a few Observations on the Nature of Catalogues, as they have been objected to by some Literati, who have delivered their Critical Remarks to the World with some Success. To consider it then as purely poetical (for this is all that merits our Notice) we may observe first, what an Air of Probability is spread over the whole Poem, by the particularising of every Nation concerned in this War. Secondly, what an entertaining Scene is presented to us, of so many Countries drawn in their natural Colours, while we wander along with the Poet amidst a beautiful Variety of Towns, Havens, Forests, Groves, Mountains, and Rivers; and are perpetually amused with his Observations on the different Soils, Products, Situations, Prospects, or with historical Anecdotes, relative to the Country, Army, or their Commanders. And lastly, there has been scarce any Epic Writer, but has drawn up one, which is at least a Proof how beautiful it has been esteemed by the greatest Geniuses in all Ages. *Homer* gave the Hint, and was followed by *Virgil*, *Statius*, *Tasso*, *Spencer*, and *Milton*.



But, whether these o'erturn'd the *Theban* State,  
 Or at *Mycenæ* kindled stern Debate,  
*Elissos* Bles from the detested Brood,  
 Such Venom stains the Surface of his Flood. 80  
 From *Egypt* a Tide of Warriors flows,  
 Who kindly bore a Part in *Ino's* Woes,  
 Where to the Hoofs of the *Gorgonian* Horse  
 A springing Fountain owes its mystic Source.  
 And the firm *Isthmus* hears on either Side 85  
 The diff'rent Murmurs of the rushing Tide.  
 From hence attend *Adrastus* to the Fray  
 Three Thousand Warriors rang'd in bright Array.  
 From distant Lands they fought the Field of Fame,  
 Varying in Manners, Origin and Name. 90  
 Some knotty Clubs, in Fire attemper'd, bear,  
 While some dismiss the quiv'ring Lance in Air.  
 These ply the sounding Sling with fatal Art,  
 And rival e'en the *Parthian's* venom'd Dart.  
 Amid the Throng *Adrastus* takes his Way. 95  
 Rever'd for Age, but more for gentle Sway.  
 Thus some old Bull the Monarch of the Meads,  
 His subject Herd around the Pasture leads.

v. 83. *Where is the Horse?*] The Fountain *Hippocrène* is reported to have sprung from a Stroke of *Pegasus's* Hoofs, as the Etymology of the Word sufficiently demonstrates; *ἵππος* signifying a Horse, and *κρήνη*, a Fountain.

v. 97. *Thus some old Bull*] This fine Simile brings to my Mind an equally fine one of *Lucan*, where he compares *Pompey* to an old Oak: the Application is obviously the same as this, though the Comparison itself is not taken from the same Object.

Qualis frugifero quercus sublimis in agro  
 Exuvias veteres Populi, sacrataque gestans  
 Dona ducum: nec jam validis radicibus hærens,  
 Pondere fixa suo est: nudosque per æra ramos

Though spent with Age, and long diffus'd to Fight,  
 His Reign depends on antiquated Might, 100  
 The youthful Steers, without Reluctance, yield  
 Their Share of Sway, nor dare dispute the Field :  
 Such Furrows on his Breast, and graceful Scars  
 Appear, the Monuments of former Wars.  
 The *Theban* Hero, full of youthful Fire, 105  
 Rode in the Rank, and next his aged Sire.  
 Beneath his Standard rang'd, a valiant Band  
 From fair *Beotia* threat their native Land.  
 Some, still impress'd with Sentiments of Love,  
 And Loyalty, to fight his Battles move; 110  
 While others prone to change, and to repine,  
 In quest of Novelty, his Army join.  
 Yet more—Three wealthy Cities own his Sway,  
 And, from the Father's Gift, the Son obey;  
 Whose Youths embodied might increase his Host, 115  
 And be some Solace for his Empire lost.  
 Such was his Habit, and the same his Arms,  
 As when he first beheld *Argia's* Charms.  
 A Lion's Spoils across his Back he wore,  
 And in his Hand two beamy Javelins bore. 120  
 The Sphinx, pourtray'd, his deathful Falchion grac'd,  
 A golden Sheath the shining Blade encas'd.  
 His Mother, Sisters, all that once were dear,  
 Rush to his Thoughts, and force a tender Tear.  
 In Prospect he surveys the Reign his own, 125  
 And swells on an imaginary Throne.

Effundens, trunco, non frondibus efficit umbram :  
 At quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro,  
 Tot circum silvæ firmo se robore tollunt,  
 Sola tamen colitur. —

*Pharsal.* Book 1.

# BOOK IV. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 141

Mean while, *Argia* from a neighb'ring Tow'r,  
 Recalls his Eyes from visionary Pow'r ;  
 The dearer Object scorns an equal Part  
 With *Thebes*, and claims an undivided Heart. 130  
 Next joyful *Tydeus* joins the marching Host  
 With Troops collected on *Ætolia's* Coast.  
 The Trumpet sounds : he trembles with Delight,  
 And pants, and starts, impatient for the Fight.  
 So shines, renew'd in youthful Pride, the Snake, 135  
 When Spring recalls him from the thorny Brake,  
 He views with Scorn the vain Attacks of Age,  
 And glows, and stiffens with collected Rage.  
 Now rising on his Spires he braves the Day,  
 And glitters with the Sun's reflected Ray ; 140  
 Or, by the fatal Aid of kindred Green,  
 Amidst the grassy Verdure lurks unseen.  
 Hapless the Swain ! whom near him Fortune draws,  
 When flaming Thirst dilates his venom'd Jaws.  
*Pleur's* Warriors in his Cause engage, 145  
 And *Pleuron*, conscious of *Althea's* Rage ;  
 They pour from *Caledon's* impending Steep,  
 From *Cbalcis*, beaten by the rolling Deep,

v. 135. *So shines renew'd*] This is taken from *Virgil's Æneid*,  
 Book 2.

*Qualis ubi in Lucem coluber, mala gramina pastus,  
 Frigida sub terrâ tumidum quem bruma tegebat,  
 Nunc positis novus exuviis, nitidusque Juventâ,  
 Lubrica convolvit sublato Pectore terga  
 Arduus ad solem, et linguis micat ore trifalcis.*

I think *Statius* (as every Imitator should do) has improved on his  
 Original. His Language is more elevated than *Virgil's*, and he  
 has manifestly the Advantage in inserting the two last Lines, as they  
 reflect the highest Honour on *Tydeus*.

And *Olenos* which boasts the Birth of *Jove*,  
 Nor yields in Fame to *Cretan Ida's* Grove, 150  
 From *Achelous* some direct their Course,  
 A Stream still mindful of *Herculean* Force.  
 No more, emerging from his pearly Bed,  
 Above th' encircling Waves he rears his Head,  
 But, lurking in his azure Caves, deplores 155  
 His dusty Margin and exhausted Shores.  
 A Troop, selected for his Guard, surrounds  
 The Chief, distain'd with honourable Wounds.  
 They twine young *Sallows* to support the Shield,  
 And in each Hand a pointed Javelin wield. 160  
*Mars*, imag'd on their glitt'ring Helms, inspires  
 Unwearied Rage and unextinguish'd Fires.  
 Such was the *Theban's*, such th' *Aetolian's* Rage,  
 'Twas doubtful in whose Cause the Chiefs engage,  
 Beneath a Youth, as yet unknown to Fame, 165  
 The *Doric* Troops, a num'rous Army, came,  
 With those, who labour where *Lyrcus* leads  
 His copious Stream along the fertile Meads;

v. 150. *From Achelous*] *Achelous* contended with *Hercules* for the the Nymph *Dejanira*; and being overcome in a Duel, was transformed into a River.

v. 163. *Such was the Theban's*] It is very observable how *Tydeus* rises in the Reader's Esteem, as the Poem advances: It opens with many Circumstances very much to the Disadvantage of his Character; especially the Conflict between him and *Polynices*: but in the second Book we find him undertaking an Embassy to *Thebes*, and endangering his Life in his Rival's Cause: In the third Book he returns covered with Wounds, and yet is willing to hazard himself again, because his Friend's Interest required it as he imagined: but in the fourth, he is represented at the Head of his Troops, breathing Revenge against the *Thebans*, and as eager as *Polynices* himself, whose Concern in the War was personal.

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Or till with Care the hoarse-resounding Shores,  
 Where *Inachus*, the King of Rivers, roars. 179  
 Of all, that o'er *Argia* bend their Course,  
 He reigns, excell'd by none in rapid Force,  
 When *Taurus*, and the wat'ry *Pleiades* rise,  
 And *Jove* in kindly Show'rs deserts the Skies.  
 To these succeed, whom swift *Asterion* laves, 175  
 And *Erasine* enfolds with ambient Waves;  
 Whom *Epidaure's* impervious Walls surround,  
 And *Dyme*, with the Gifts of *Bacchus* crown'd.  
 Of *Pylian* Youths a martial Squadron came,  
 Tho' *Pylos* then could boast of little Fame; 180  
 And *Nestor*, blooming in his second Age  
 Declin'd the Charge, and check'd his youthful Rage.  
*Hippomedon*, their hardy Chief, inspires  
 The Love of War, and with Example fires.  
 A triple Crest his dazzling Helmet grac'd, 185  
 An Iron Coat of Mail his Sides embrac'd.  
 A Golden Cuirass blazes on his Breast,  
 With all the Guilt of *Danaus* exprest.  
 The Furies light, with inauspicious Hands,  
 The Bridal Torch, and tie the nuptial Bands: 99  
 Their Sire each Instrument of Wrath supplies,  
 And views the treach'rous Swords with curious Eyes.  
 The graceful Hero rein'd a gen'rous Steed,  
 New to the Fight, and of *Nemean* Breed.  
 From Earth emerging, Clouds of Dust arise 195  
 Beneath their rapid Course, and veil the Skies.  
 So, when *Hyleus* from some Mountain's Height,  
 Or hollow Cliff precipitates his Flight,

v. 197. So, when *Hyleus*.] *Hyleus* was a Centaur. This is one of the noblest Similes in all *Statius*, and the most justly corresponding

The bending Forests to the Shock give Way,  
 Stretch'd in long Ruin, and expos'd to Day. 200  
 The trembling Cattle headlong seek the Ground,  
 And *Offa* shudders at the distant Sound.  
 With Horror e'en his shaggy Brethren hear  
 The rushing Monster, nor dismiss their Fear;  
 While *Peneus*' Waves, suspended in their Course, 205  
 Roll backward, hopeless to withstand his Force.  
 Who to describe their Numbers can aspire,  
 Or equal *Martial* with *Phæbean* Fire?  
 The great *Alcides* drains *Tyrinthe*'s Coast  
 Of all her Youths, to form a scanty Host. 210  
*Tyrinthe* still the Sword with Glory wields,  
 And Warriors worthy of her Patron yields.  
 But Love of Glory, and a wealthy Soil,  
 Have made them more averse to martial Toil.  
 Few human Footsteps in the Fields descry'd, 215  
 The curious Traveller scarce finds a Guide,  
 To lead him where the moss-grown Turret stands,  
 And Walls, the Labour of *Ætnean* Hands.  
 Yet hence three hundred Youths to Fight repair,  
 Nor Swords, nor founding Slings employ their Care:  
 Each shew'd, like *Hercules*, in Savage Pride, 221  
 And on his Shoulders wore a Lion's Hide.  
 Their Spear a Trunk of Pine, a Quiver hung  
 Behind, and clatter'd as they march'd along.

ing in its Circumstances to the Thing described, The Diction is lofty, the Images striking, and the Application obviously proper and agreeable to the Subject. The Version, however short it falls of the Original, may be sufficient to shew there was an Endeavour at least to imitate it.

v. 217. *The Labour of Ætnean Hands*] *Tyrinthe* is reported to have been built by the *Cyclops*.

# BOOK IV. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 145

They sing a *Pean* in their Patron's Praise, 225  
 And in sonorous Verse his Labours raise.  
 With Joy the God from shaded *Oeta's* Height  
 Hears his immortal Feats, and varied Fight.  
 From *Nemea* next a social Squadron came,  
 And where *Molorchus*, crown'd with endless Fame, 230  
 Receiv'd the Warrior, spent with recent Toils,  
 And loaded with the Monster's reeking Spoils.  
 The Straw-built Mansion, and adjacent Field,  
 With Art are imag'd on each brazen Shield,  
 The sacred Oak reported to sustain 235  
 His Bow unstrung, and where he press'd the Plain.  
 But *Capaneus*, averse to guide the Car,  
 On Foot o'erlook'd the Plain, and moving War.  
 A Shield he bore with four thick Folds o'ercast  
 Of tough Bull-hides, of solid Brass the last. 240  
 Here *Vulcan* frees the Hydra's vital Breath,  
 And opes each secret Avenue to Death.  
 The Concave Snakes, in Silver carv'd, enfold,  
 While others seem to burn in mimic Gold.  
 Around its Iron Margin *Lerna* leads 245  
 Her azure Stream, and mingles with the Meads.  
 His shining Breast-plate was a mingled Mass  
 Of ductile Gold and Rows of Mountain-Brass.

v. 237. *But Capaneus*] The Poet ushers in *Capaneus* with Abundance of Pomp: His Strength, his Size, his Tower-like Shield, in a Word, his whole Figure strikes our Eyes in all the strongest Colours of Poetry. He forces him on the Observation of the Reader by the Grandeur of his Description; and raises our Expectations of him, intending to make him perform many remarkable Actions in the Sequel of the Poem and become worthy of falling by the Hand of *Jove* himself. This Anecdote concerning his Spear is taken from *Homer*, and intended to raise the Idea of his Hero, by giving him such as no other could wield.

Dreadful it gleam'd around: no female Art  
 Could to the pond'rous Metal Form impart. 250  
 A Giant on his Helmet frowns impress'd,  
 And triple were the Honours of his Crest.  
 His Cypress-Spear with Steel encircled shone,  
 Not to be pois'd but by his Hands alone.  
*Itome's* Mountaineers beneath his Care, 255  
 And the *Messenians* to the Fight repair;  
 Where *Tbrion*, and the craggy *Apy* show  
 Their Cliffs above, and *Pteleon's* Walls below.  
 From *Helas*, famous for her gen'rous Race  
 Of Steeds, and *Dorion*, for the Bard's Disgrace, 260  
 They rush.—Here *Thamyris* in singing strove  
 To match the tuneful Progeny of *Jove*:  
 Unskill'd to judge the future by the past,  
 He prov'd the Muse's matchless Pow'r at last.  
 To Silence doom'd, no more he durst aspire 265  
 To raise his Voice, or string the vanquish'd Lyre.  
 Constrain'd by Threats, or with Intreaties won,  
 The Prophet seeks the Fate he cannot shun.

v. 249. *No female Art*] *Statius* alludes here to a Custom among the antient Heathens of Mothers making this Species of Armour for their Sons.

v. 261. *Here Thamyris*] I am surprized, that *Statius*, who generally strikes out of the common Track, should be such a Plagiarist as to relate this after *Homer*; and more so, that he was so diffident of his own Abilities as to copy it so closely. The Words are nearly the same.

Δάμωι, ὅς ποτε Μῦσας  
 ἄνθρωποι, Θάμωρον τοι δρῶντι παῖσιν αἰδέσθαι,  
 Οἰζυλίσθην ἵκναι παρ' Εὐφρόνι Οἰζυλίσθῃ.  
 Σταδίῳ γὰρ ἐχέμεν νικητέρου, αἶψα δὲ αὐτοῖς  
 Μῦσας αἰδέσθαι, ἔσται Διὸς αἰγυγίον.  
 Αἰδέεσθαι χαλκαστῆρας, παρὶν Δίονι, αὐτοῖς αἰδέσθαι  
 Θεωσιέω ἀφίλοντι, ἢ ἐπὶ λαλοῦσι κἀκέρειν. Lib. 2. V. 107. Cat.



Nor yet was Prescience wanting to the Deed,  
 Full well he saw what Destiny decreed : 270  
 But *Phabus*, hopeless to prolong his Date,  
 Withholds his Succour, and assents to Fate.  
 Yet more—unmindful of the late Portent,  
 His Spouse accelerates the dire Event,  
 And, swell'd with Pride and vain Ambition, sold 275  
 Her Husband's Life for all-bewitching Gold.  
*Argia* saw the Matron's guilty Views,  
 And that the Fates forbid her to refuse ;  
 Then unrepining, from her snowy Breast  
 She loos'd the Gift, and thus her Will exprest. 280  
 These woeful Times far other Cares require  
 Than those of costly Dress and rich Attire.  
 No more shall Art enhance *Argia's* Charms,  
 While her dear Consort sheaths his Limbs in Arms ;  
 A while without Reluctance I resign 285  
 Those Trifles, since for him alone I shine :  
 A while the Arts of *Pallas* shall employ  
 The pensive Hours, and Sorrow be my Joy :  
 A while a Suppliant to the Gods I'll mourn,  
 And weary Heav'n with Vows for his Return. 290  
 A greater Lustre will each Jewel yield,  
 When crown'd with Laurels from the *Theban* Field,

v. 286. *Since for him*] This Conduct of *Argia*, however laudable it is in itself, would be esteemed an unnecessary Act of Politeness by our modern Belles, who are generally careless and indifferent how they appear at Home, but never think themselves sufficiently decorated for the public View ; as if their Husbands had the least Claim to their Care of their Persons and Dress. But methinks it is highly indiscreet in them to lose the good Graces of their Husbands in Hopes of extending their Conquests : as it would be deemed Folly in a King to go in quest of new Countries before he had secured to himself the Possession of those already acquired.

My Spouse shall hail me Partner of his Reign,  
 And votive Choirs attend the crowded Fane.  
 Then to my Sister let it be convey'd, 295  
 If this will gain her Husband's social Aid.  
 Hence Treason, Murder, Phrenzy, all the Woes  
 That shook the Augur's guilty Dome, arose.  
*Tisiphone* with secret Pleasure smiles  
 At her ripe Project, and successful Wiles. 300  
 Four rapid Coursers grace the Prophet's Car,  
 Of heav'nly Race, and thunder thro' the War.  
 From *Leda's* Son he stole the matchless Breed  
 By mortal Mares, unequal to the Steed.  
*Parnassian* Wreaths upon his Forehead shone, 305  
 And by his Habit was the Prophet known.  
 Green Olive-Leaves his glitt'ring Helm inclose,  
 And from between his Crests a Mitre rose.  
 A Grove of Spears his better Hand sustains,  
 His other moderates the flowing Reins. 310  
 Afar he shines, conspicuous in the Field,  
 And waves the *Python* imag'd on his Shield.  
 A Troop of *Pylian* Youths surround the Car,  
 And *Amycleans*, Partners in the War.  
 From *Malea's* noted Shore a Squadron came, 315  
 And *Caria*, sacred to *Diana's* Name;  
 From fair *Eurotas*, crown'd with Olive-Groves,  
 And *Messe*, famous for her Silver Doves.  
 Him, as their Chief, a hardy Race attend,  
 Whom *Taygetus* and hilly *Pharis* send: 320

v. 315. From *Malca's*] *Malea* was a Promontory of *Peloponnesus*, noted for its dangerous Rocks: it is situated between the Bays of *Argos* and *Laconia*, and is now called *Cape Malis di Santo Angelo*.

*Cyllenius* trains them in the dusty Field  
 To War, and breathes a Soul untaught to yield.  
 Hence they no Cares for this frail Being feel,  
 But rush undaunted on the pointed Steel.  
 The Parents glory in their Offspring's Death, 325  
 And urge them to resign their vital Breath :  
 Of all that crowd around the Fun'ral Pile,  
 The Mother is observ'd alone to smile.  
 A Pair of Javelins arms their better Hand,  
 The Reins and stubborn Steed the left demand. 330  
 Bare are their Shoulders ; floating from behind  
 A shaggy *Tunic* dances in the Wind.  
 The Swan resigns the Honours of his Breast,  
 To grace their Helms, and form a rising Crest.  
 Nor did these march alone beneath his Care, 335  
 But social *Elis* adds an equal Share.  
*Alpheus* next affords his *Pisa*'s Aid,  
 Who seeks thro' Seas the lov'd *Sicilian* Maid.  
 Their Chariots hide the Plain. Their Horses feel,  
 Instead of Spurs, the Dart and pointed Steel. 340  
 From horrid Rites their present Skill arose,  
 And to an impious Source its Progress owes :  
 What Time *Ocnomaus*, from his Car o'erthrown,  
 Resign'd at once his Life, his Fame and Crown.  
 Their Coursers champ the Bit, or paw the Ground, 345  
 And scatter Clouds of Smoke and Foam around.

v. 337.] So *Lucan*].

—populisque per æquora mittens  
*Sicaniis Alpheus* aquas, Book 3. Ver. 176.

v. 341. From horrid Rites] For an Account of this Custom, and *Ocnomaus*, see Note on the first Book, Verse 382.

*Parthenopæus* next, by Stealth repairs  
To *Argos*, and eludes his Mother's Cares.

v. 347. *Parthenopæus*] *Tasso* seems to have copied his Account of *Rinaldo's* Flight from this of *Parthenopæus*.

All'or (nè pur tre lustri avea finiti)  
Fuggì soletto, e corse strade ignote;  
Varcò l'Egeo, passò di Grecia i liti,  
Giunse nel campo in region remote;  
Nobilissima fuga, e che l' imiti  
Ben degna alcun magnanimo Nipote.  
Tre anni son, ch' è in guerra, e intempestiva  
Molle piuma del mento à pena usciva.

Canto 1.

As we have now seen the seven Heroes armed and accoutred for Battle, it will be worth while to take a critical Review of them, and see how the Poet has acquitted himself in the Description. Though I cannot answer for the different Tastes of Readers, yet I flatter myself with the Hopes of their Approbation, with Respect to the Author. The chief Beauty here is Variety, without which all the subaltern Decorations of Imagery, Diction and Numbers are entirely lost, as they are common to other Parts of the Poem. To discover this in his Characters, we need only to review them distinctly; and we shall find that of *Adrastus* to be no other than we can expect in a Man of his Years and Inclinations. Exclusive of the Cares for his People, Old Age naturally creates an Aversion to War, as it is so diametrically opposite to their *Суммum Bonum*, Tranquillity. *Polynices*, though by no Means a Coward, seems to like the War no farther than as it is conducive to his Interest, and the Instrument of gratifying his Ambition. The Love of Glory, abstracted from that of Empire, seems to have but little Influence over him; but, when united with it, inspirits him to the highest Degree of Heroism. *Tydeus*, subject as he seems to be to the Impressions of Glory and Fame, confides more in the Justice of his Cause, than any other Motive. As he has no personal Interest in the War, his Inclination to it must arise either from the Thirst of Glory or Desire of Revenge: As to the first, we may conclude, from the whole Tenor of his Conduct, that it could not engage him in supporting Injustice (since his Attachment to *Polynices* was owing to his Love of the opposite Virtue:) The Desire of Revenge then is the prevailing Motive; but only so far as it is founded on an honourable Basis, and resulting, as I have before observ'd, from the Justice of the Cause. *Hippomedon* and *Parthenopæus* are represented as two daring Youths, who had no personal Prejudices against the *Thebans*, nor lay under any Obligations to the Court of *Argos*; their sole Inducements were the Love of Glory, and Study of War, under

As yet a beardless Youth, the Troops he led,  
 And shone in Arms, conspicuous at their Head. 350  
 Chance aids his Flight: For while the Matron roves  
 Thro' distant Tracts of Land, and shadowy Groves,  
 The daring Youth, impell'd by adverse Fates,  
 O'erleap'd the Wall, and forc'd the Palace-Gates.  
 In Form and Feature ev'ry Son of Fame 355  
 Resign'd the Prize, nor durst dispute his Claim.  
 Nor had his Courage, and Desert in Arms  
 Been deem'd inferior to his outward Charms,  
 But Death o'ertook him, e'er the rip'ning Sun  
 Of Manhood on his budding Strength had shone. 360  
 His Beauty fir'd each Guardian of the Grove,  
 The Gods with Envy, and the Nymphs with Love.  
 Fame tells, *Diana*, when she first survey'd  
 The little Wanton sporting in the Shade,  
 Forgave his Mother's Flame, and broken Vow, 365  
 And grac'd him with a Quiver and a Bow.  
 He springs, impatient for the mix'd Alarms  
 Of shrilling Clarions, and resounding Arms,

See so experienced a General as *Adrastus*. The warlike Disposition of *Capaneus* arises rather from a Principle of Inhumanity. He is a meer Homicide, and satiable by Blood and Carnage only. His Behaviour to *Amphiaræus*, however palliated with the specious Pretence of Friendship to *Tydeus*, is arrogant, impious, and inhuman: His Consciousness of superior Valour makes him proud; his Pride, impatient of Reproof; and his Impatience of Reproof hurries him on to Impiety and Cruelty. The last, who offers himself to our View, is *Amphiaræus*, a Chief of a meek, dispassionate Temper, who naturally prefers the Sweetness of Peace to the Hurry and Fatigue of a military Life. He was told that his Fate was inevitable, and, in Consequence of this Prediction, puts a good Face on it, and marches to Battle with a philosophic Calmness and Resignation to the Divine Will.

And

And burns to mingle in the dusty Course  
 Of crimson War, and curb a captive Horse. 370  
 No more he joys to range the guiltless Wood  
 With Arrows, innocent of human Blood.  
 Above the rest he shines in flaming Gold,  
 And *Tyrian* Purple, glorious to behold.  
 His Mother's Combats in th' *Ætolian* Field 375  
 He bears engrav'd upon his slender Shield.  
 A Quiver, fraught with *Gnosſian* Shafts he bore,  
 Of Amber fram'd, with Jaspers studded o'er.  
 A Lynx's spotted Hide adorns his Steed.  
 Which match'd the Stag or Western Wind in Speed. 380  
 With Pride he bounds beneath th' unwonted Load  
 Of gleaming Armour, fit to grace a God.  
 His Master smiles : the Roses on his Cheek,  
 And youthful Bloom his tender Age bespeak,  
 To him th' *Arcadian* Youths with Joy resign 385  
 The chief Command, and clad in Armour shine.  
 Fame says, from op'ning Trees they took their Birth,  
 When human Footsteps seal'd the new born Earth ;  
 And flourish'd, e're revolving *Cynthia* shone,  
 Or devious Planets gleam'd around her Throne. 390  
 No Houses then repell'd the driving Rain,  
 Nor *Ceres* glitter'd on the yellow Plain ;

v. 387. *Fame says*] *Evander* gives a similar Account of those *Arcadians*, who planted a Colony in *Italy*.

Gensque virum truncis et duro robore nata :  
 Quis neque mos, neque cultus erat : nec jungere tauros,  
 Aut componere opes norant, aut parcere parto. *Æneid*.

And *Ovid* mentions their Antiquity.

Ante Jovem genitum terras habuisse feruntur  
 Arcades, et Lunâ gens prior illa fuit.

BOOK IV: STATIUS'S THEBAID. 153

No Temples lodg'd the sculptur'd Form of *Jove*,  
 Nor *Hymen* sanctified the Flames of Love.  
 Oft did the pregnant Oak its Sides uncloſe, 395  
 Nor ask'd *Lucina's* Hand to eaſe its Throes.  
 With Horror and Amaze they firſt ſurvey'd  
 The ſwift Viciffitudes of Light and Shade;  
 And, when the Sun withdrew its ſetting Ray,  
 Fear'd an eternal Abſence of the Day. 400  
 From *Menalos* th' aſſembling Ruſtics rove,  
 And quit, in Crouds, the black *Parthenian* Grove.  
 Then *Rhipe*, on her ſnowy Cliffs reclin'd,  
 And high *Eniſpe*, obvious to the Wind.  
 From *Stratie* the raging Hinds deſcend; 405  
*Tegæan* Swains the Exile's Cauſe befriend.  
*Cyllene* mourns her deſert Height in vain;  
 And *Pallas* weeps for her diſpeopled Plain.  
 They flock from where the gentle *Ladon* glides,  
 And rapid *Cliton* rolls his hoarſer Tides. 410  
 Where white *Lampia* thunders in his Courſe,  
 And *Peneus*, whence the *Styx* derives his Source.  
 From *Axon* then they ſought the deathful Field,  
 To which in Howlings *Ida's* Self muſt yield.  
 Like Waves, they pour from the *Parrhaſian* Grove,  
 Sacred to *Cupid*, and the Queen of Love: 416  
 Where, to facilitate *Calyſto's* Rape,  
 Great *Jove* aſſum'd *Diana's* Arms and Shape.

v. 414. *To which in Howlings*] There was a Temple here dedicated to *Cybele*, whoſe Votaries were obliged to howl in a peculiar Manner, during the Solemnization of the ſacred Rites.

v. 418. *Great Jove aſſum'd*] There was a particular Reaſon for his being-diſguiſed in this Manner; *Calyſto* being one of *Diana's* Virgin Attendants.

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*Orchomenos*, whose Plains in Sheep abound,  
 And *Cynosure*, for Savage Beasts renown'd. 420  
 Then *Mars* depopulates th' *Ægyptian* Plains,  
 And lofty *Psephus* of her Warriors drains :  
*Stymphalus* next, and where in Days of Yore  
 The brave *Alcides* slew the foaming Boar.  
*Arcadians* all : tho' various in their Name, 425  
 And Manners, yet their Nation was the same.  
 For Javelins some huge *Paphian* Myrtles wield,  
 Whilst others, arm'd with Sheep-Crooks take the Field.  
 These, skilful Archers, bend the stubborn Bow,  
 And those with Stakes alone provoke the Foe. 430  
 One in a spreading Hat his Hair confines,  
 Another in a crested Helmet shines.  
 Those with the Spoils of some huge Monster hide  
 Their Features, glorying in terrific Pride.  
*Mycenæ's* Sons alone withheld their Aid, 435  
 Nor they with neutral Ease the War survey'd :  
 The Sun's abrupt Retreat, and impious Rage  
 Of adverse Brothers, all their Arms engage.  
 Meanwhile th' ungrateful Messenger in Tears  
 The mournful Tale to *Atalanta* bears ; 440  
 How her rash Son had fought the *Theban* Fight,  
 With all the Youths, Companions in his Flight.  
 Her fainty Limbs with sudden Horror shook ;  
 The falling Bow her feeble Grasp forsook :  
 Swift as the Wind, impatient of Delay, 445  
 Thro' adverse Woods and Streams she forc'd her Way.

v. 423. *And where in Days*] This was *Erymanthus*.

v. 439. *Of adverse Brothers*] viz. *Atræus* and *Thyestes*, whose Story is too well known to need any farther Elucidation.



Her Hair, dishevell'd, in Confusion flies.  
 Her naked Breasts in wild Emotion rise.  
 The Tigress thus, with dreadful Anguish stung,  
 Pursues the Spoiler, and demands her Young. 450  
 At length she snatch'd his Courser's foaming Reins.  
 And the pale Warrior thus a while detains.  
 Whence springs this impotent, this useless Rage.  
 This Heat, that ill becomes thy tender Age?  
 Canst thou th' experienc'd Soldier's Hardships bear, 455  
 In Toils consume the Day, the Night in Care?  
 Canst thou the Falchion wield, and bend the Bow,  
 Or with the Strength I wish, repel the Foe?  
 Hast thou forgot, when on *Cyllene's* Height  
 Thy slacken'd Knees could scarce support thy Weight,  
 While the fierce Boar- the Terror of the Wood, 461  
 Close at thy Side, with threat'ning Aspect stood?  
 How little had avail'd this useless Blade,  
 Had my unerring Shafts withheld their Aid!  
 But here, alas! a Mother's Art must fail, 465  
 Nor *Lycian* Bows, or *Gnosian* Shafts avail.  
 Nor will the trusted Courser Aid supply,  
 When the loud Tumult speaks the Battle nigh.

v. 453. *Whence springs*] The Abruptness of this Oration admirably expresses the Violence of Affection in *Atalanta*; and the Silence of *Perseus* opens on the other Hand, has a beautiful Effect. We may suppose, it was a dreadful Mortification to the young Adventurer, (who assumed the Man as much as possible) to be called a smock-faced Boy, reminded of his Weakness, and desired to return home, among a Croud of sneering Warriors. *Barthius*, a Critic of Eminence, in the Height of Rapture on this Occasion, cries out, *Mirus salium artifex Papinius!*

v. 466. *Nor Lycian Bows*] They were held in the greatest Request among the ancient Heathens. The Arrows were called *Gnosian* from *Gnosus*, a City of *Crete*.

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In vain you mingle with the Sons of *Mars*,  
 Scarce qualified to serve in *Cupid's* Wars. 470  
 Nor were there Omens wanting to disclose  
 Thy cruel Flight, the Source of future Woes :  
*Diana's* Fane a sudden Tremor shook ;  
 The Goddesses frown'd. and angry was her Look :  
 The falling Trophies shook the sacred Floor, 475  
 These Arrows carry certain Death no more,  
 But, erring from the Mark. desert the Bow :  
 Nor my faint Arms their wonted Vigour know.  
 Awhile await, and check thy youthful Rage,  
 Till Strength succeed, the Gift of riper Age ; 480  
 Till the soft Down thy tender Cheeks embrace,  
 And stamp an Air of Manhood on thy Face :  
 Nor Tears, nor Pray'rs shall then retard thy Flight ;  
 Myself will arm thee for the glorious Fight.  
 Hence then—Nor let me here in vain repine ; 485  
 Will you, his Comrades, aid the rash Design ?  
 How well those stubborn Hearts which nought can move,  
 Your steely Race, and inbred Rigour prove !  
 Here paus'd the Matron : the surrounding Chiefs  
 Strive to remove her Fears, and sooth her Griefs. 490

v. 470. *Scarce qualified*] Those Commentators who bring an Author off upon every Occasion with this Excuse, that he was obliged to conform to the national Custom or the Times, may find an Apology for this Raillery of *Atalanta* ; but I am confident it would be esteemed indelicate, if not indecent and immodest in a modern Female.

v. 475. *The falling*] So *Lucan*.

Delapsaque templis  
 Dona suis.

*Pharsal.* B. 1.

Scarce, when the Trumpet sounds the last Alarms,  
 Can she dismiss him from her pious Arms ;  
 Oft she commends him to the Monarch's Care,  
 And thus awhile retards the Fate of War.  
 Meanwhile an honest Shame the *Thebans* awes, 495  
 And cools their Ardor in the Royal Cause ;  
 With just Aversion they awhile delay'd  
 The Town's Defence, nor march in quest of Aid.  
 Tho' Fear-inspiring Fame increas'd their Woes,  
 Doubling the Strength and Number of the Foes. 500  
 No wonted Eagerness to take the Field  
 Impells to fix th' hereditary Shield,  
 None fit the Rein, to check or urge his Speed,  
 And animate to Fight the snorting Steed :  
 Heartless and void of military Rage, 505  
 They sought the Combat, and, constrain'd, engage:  
 Each seeks a just Pretence to shun his Doom ;  
 One pleads a num'rous Progeny at home :  
 Another for his pregnant Consort fears.  
 Or mourns his Sire infirm and worn with Years. 510

v. 491. *Scarce had the Trumpet*] Every one of my Readers, who has undergone the like severe Trial, must sympathize with the disconsolate *Atalanta*, and confess the Poet to be a faithful Interpreter of Nature. It is so common in these Interviews to make Use of such Repetitions, and summon the meekest Trifles to one's Aid, in Order to effect a short Delay, and put off the Anguish of the parting Moment. *Lucan* says of *Pompey* :

————— Mentem jam verba quaratam  
 Destituunt blandæque juvat ventura trahentem  
 Indulgere moræ, et tempus subducere satis.

v. 495. *Meanwhile an honest Shame*] The Poet has made a just Distinction between the Disposition of the Allies and *Thebans* to begin Hostilities. The former, conscious of their own Innocence, march to Battle with the greatest Confidence and Alacrity ; the latter, sensible of the unjust Cause they are engaged in, and supporting, are represented as dejected, timorous, and desponding.

The God of War inspir'd no martial Rage :  
 Their Walls, decay'd with gath'ring Filth and Age,  
 And Tow'rs, which at *Amphion's* Call arose,  
 On ev'ry Side a threat'ning Gap disclose :  
 But now, alas ! no Bard with skilful Hand 515  
 Repairs the Breach, or bids the Rampire stand.  
 But social Love the stern *Baotian* warms,  
 To snatch from hostile Rage, and impious Arms  
 The Liberties of *Thebes*, and ancient Laws,  
 And aid the Public, not the Royal Cause. 520  
 As, when the Wolf, with raging Hunger bold,  
 Has bath'd the Plain in Blood, or storm'd the Fold,  
 With Paunch distended, and with lolling Tongue,  
 He shuns the Vengeance of the rustic Throng ;  
 And, conscious of the Crime, at ev'ry Sound 525  
 Exerts his Speed, and hurls his Eyes around.  
 Thus did each fresh Report of Fame suggest  
 The Fears of Vengeance to the Tyrant's Breast.  
 One spreads a Rumour, that *Lernean* Horse  
 From old *Afopus* bent to *Thebes* their Course ; 530

\* v. 521. *As when the Wolf*] The guilty Conscience of *Atreus* is well illustrated in this Comparison : The Outlines of this speaking Picture were copied from *Homer* on a similar Subject.

Ἄλ' οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔτισι θάρ' κακὸν ῥέξαντι τοκάς,  
 Ὅτε κύμα πταίῃσσι, ἢ πενίλῳ ἀμφὶ βίῳσιν,  
 Φεύγει, πρὶν περ ὄμματα κατασθέναι ἀνδρῶν.

*Virgil* has copied it likewise.

Ac voluit ille, prius quam tela inimica sequantur,  
 Continuo in montes sese avius abdidit altos  
 Occiso Pastore Lupus, magnove Juvenco,  
 Consciis audacis facti : caudamque remulcens  
 Subjecit pavitantem utero, sylvasque petivit.

*Virgil* has undoubtedly the Advantage in Point of Subject ; though I think the Simile itself is more copious, and contains a greater Assemblage of Images in our Author.

Another, that *Gibbeton's* tow'ring Height  
 Was occupied, a Prelude to the Fight:  
 A third relates, that fam'd *Platæa* shone  
 With hostile Fires, and Splendors not her own.  
 Then *Parian* Images at ev'ry Pore  
 Were seen to sweat, and *Diree* blush'd with Gore.  
 Again on Earth the speaking Sphynx was heard,  
 And monstrous Births the teeming Mother scar'd.  
 On ev'ry Breast presaging Terror sate,  
 Fraught with some Omen of approaching Fate. 540  
 But lo! a fiercer Object strikes their Eyes,  
 Forth thro' the Streets the frantic Priests flies  
 Of *Bacchus*, and from his deserted Fane  
 With Hair dishevel'd rush'd along the Plain.  
 She wildly star'd, and urg'd with Rage divine, 545  
 Shook high above her Head a flaming Pine.  
 Enthusiastic Heavings swell'd her Breast,  
 And thus her Voice th' informing God address.  
 Almighty Pow'r! whose Aid we boast no more, 549  
 Transfert'd from *Thebes* to some more favour'd Shore;

v. 535. *Then Parian Images*] Some of these Prognostics are mentioned by *Lucan*, as preceding the Civil War.

Monstrisq[ue] homin[um] partus numeroq[ue] modeq[ue]  
 Membrorum, matremq[ue] suos conterruit Infans:

And again:

Indigetes flevisse Deos, urbisq[ue] laborem  
 Testatos sudore Lares.——

*Phars. B. 1.*

v. 541. *But lo! a fiercer Object.*] This is a beautiful imitation of the following Passage in *Lucan*.

Terruerant satis hæc pavidam præfagia plebem:  
 Sed majora premunt. Nam qualis vertice Pindi  
 Edonis Ogygio decurrit plena Lyæo:  
 Talis et attonitam rapitur, matrona per urbem,  
 Vocibus his prodens urgentem pectora Phœbum.

And the Prophecy annexed to it, excels the Original.

Whether you shake beneath the Northern Pole  
 Your wreathed Spear, and fire the *Thracian's* Soul;  
 Or bid the mangled Vine revive again,  
 While stern *Lycurgus* threats, but threats in vain:  
 Whether you rage, where down a length'ning Steep 555  
 The *Ganges* rushes, mingling with the Deep;  
 Or from the Spring of *Hermus* rise in Gold,  
 Whose parting Waves the sacred Ore unfold:  
 Incline thine Ear: nor let us e'er despair  
 Of Aid, nor mourn thy alienated Care. 560  
 For royal Perjuries, nor Crimes our own,  
 We weep in Slaughter, and in War atone:  
 Yet still, O *Bacchus*, we thy Pow'r obey,  
 And Gifts unceasing on thy Altars lay.  
 But, e'er I speak, what wretched *Thebes* must feel. 565  
 And Truths, invidious to the Great, reveal;  
 Transport, and waft me to the Northern Pole,  
 Where endless Frosts the Rays of *Sol* controul.  
 Was it for this I was constrain'd to swear,  
 When first the sacred Fillets bound my Hair? 570

v. 553. Or bid the mangled Vine.] *Lycurgus*, King of *Thrace*, caused most of the Vines to be rooted up, so that his Subjects were obliged to mix it with Water, when it was less plentiful: Hence it was feigned, that he drove *Bacchus* himself out of *Thrace*, and that *Thebes* received him into her Bosom, according to the following Lines of *Homer*.

Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὑπὲρ Δρύαντος, ἥδ' ἐκ κρατερὸς Λυκίργου  
 Δένδ' ἔτι, ὅς ῥα θύοισιν ἐκέραιόισιν ἔραζεν.  
 Ος ποτὶ μαινερθεῖσι Διωνύσοισι τιθῆναι  
 Σέβει κατ' ἡγάθων Νουσίῃσιν· αἳ δ' ἄμα πᾶσιν  
 Θούδῃσι χαμαὶ κατέχυναν, ὅπ' ἀνδροφόνου Λυκίργου  
 Θανόμεναι βυπλῆγι. Διόνυσος δὲ φοβηθεὶς  
 Δύστη' ἀλὸς κατὰ κύμα, Θέτις δ' ὑπιδίξατο κίλπη  
 Δεδίετα.

*Iliad*, B. 6. V. 130.

I see two stately Monarchs of the Mead,  
 Their Honours equal, and the same their Breed,  
 With clashing Horns, and butting Heads engage,  
 And fall the Victims of each other's Rage.  
 More guilty he, who scorns a Share to yield, 575  
 And claims the sole Possession of the Field :  
 Meanwhile a Friend to neither wears the Spoils,  
 And reaps the Harvest of their bloody Toils.  
 Here paus'd the Dame : th' exhausted Fury ceas'd,  
 And, ebbing in her Soul, the God decreas'd. 580  
 Urg'd by these Omens, and superior Dread,  
 The King for Counsel to *Tiresias* fled ;  
 Blind was the Seer, yet boundless was his View,  
 The present, future, and the past he knew.

v. 577. *Meanwhile a Friend*] This was *Creon*, who seized the Kingdom of *Thebes* after the Death of the two Brothers, figured under the two Bulls.

As I am not often guilty of troubling the Reader with verbal Criticisms and various Readings, I hope he will pardon me, for barely mentioning a trifling Dispute, which hath arisen about the 576th Verse, between two celebrated verbal Critics. One of them contends warmly that we should read *Mountain*; alledging, the Supposition to be more natural of Beasts feeding there than on a *Field*, as I have translated it. This must surely be a Controversy about nothing, the Meaning of the Author in the Words *communem Montem* is nothing more than a *Pasture* common to both. One of these Disputants has quoted from *Virgil*, in Support of his Opinion

Stapet inscius alto

Accipiens sonitum saxi de vertice Pastor

Forgetting that the same Author had said in the 12th Book

Ac velut ingenti Silæ, summove in Taburno  
 Cum duo conversis inimica in prælia Tauri  
 Frontibus incurrunt.

Here *Taburnus* and *Sila* are two Mountains, and Bulls are feeding on them; whereas in the other they are Sheep, as appears from the Word *Pastor*, and the Place they were feeding on, a Rock.

No Sacrifice employs his pious Cares, 585  
 Nor th' Augur's Art his lawful Notice shares,  
 Nor seeks he from presaging Veins to prove,  
 Or learn in *Delphic* Caves the Will of *Jove*;  
 No list'ning Stars his potent Charms invoke,  
 Nor fragrant Altars yield prophetic Smoke : 590  
 But horrid Arts of Magic are explor'd,  
 And *Stygian* Rites, by *Jove* and Heav'n abhor'd;  
 Oft he dispeoples *Pluto's* airy Reign,  
 And bids reviving Phantoms breathe again.  
 Of blasted Sheep, selected from the Field, 595  
 Whose Fleeces still the Stench of Sulphur yield,  
 The mangled Entrails first are cull'd with Care,  
 Then cleans'd with Grass, and hallow'd with a Prayer.  
 There grew a Wood, superior to the Rage  
 Of wintry Tempests, and corroding Age ; 600  
 Whose Boughs with interweaving Union form  
 A Shade, impervious to the Sun and Storm.  
 Invidious Winds at awful Distance fly,  
 And glancing Light'nings shoot obliquely by.  
 No Breeze in murm'ring Sounds is heard to breathe, 605  
 The same eternal Horror broods beneath.  
 Some scatter'd Images of Light invade,  
 And but enhance the Terror of the Shade.  
 Nor was the sacred Silence of the Grove  
 Unnotic'd by the Progeny of *Jove* ; 610

v. 599. *There grew*] The two celebrated Descriptions of a Wood in *Lucan* and *Tasso* are, I think, inferior to this before us. The five first Verses in the Original are highly finished ; but the last is inexpressibly beautiful. The Description of *Lucan* is in the 3d. Book of his *Pharsalia*, and that of *Tasso* in the 13th Canto of his *Jerusalem*.



# BOOK IV. STATIUS' THEBAID. 163

*Latonia's* Form, engrav'd on ev'ry Tree,  
 Attests the Presence of the Deity.  
 Oft have her Shafts resounded thro' the Glade,  
 And howling Dogs her passing Orb betray'd;  
 As from her Uncle's dark Domains she flies, 615  
 And in *Diana's* Form deserts the Skies.  
 But, when the Mountains glitter with her Light,  
 And the still Hours to pleasing Sleep invite;  
 Here on her Quiver she reclines her Head,  
 With Heaps of glitt'ring Jav'lines round her spread. 620  
 Before the Entrance lies the Field of *Mars*,  
 Fam'd for its Iron Crop and rising Wars.  
 Bold was the Wretch who durst explore again  
 The fatal Horrors of the bloody Plain;  
 And, heedless of the past, employ his Toil 625  
 To turn, and exercise the guilty Soil.  
 Oft (as Fame tells) the Earth in Sounds of Woe  
 Is heard to groan from hollow Depths below,  
 When her indignant Sons in Fight engage,  
 And deal their Blows around with airy Rage. 630  
 The trembling Rustic leaves his Work undone,  
 And lowing Herds the dreaded Issue shun.  
 Here (for the Place itself convenient lies  
 For *Stygian* Rites, and impious Aid supplies)

v. 611. *Latonia's* Form] This Goddess was called *Lana* in Heaven, *Diana* upon Earth, and *Proserpine* in Hell. In the *Pagan* Theology it was very usual for their Gods to have many Names, as well as many Offices. This Piece of Superstition is exactly copied from them by the Papists, in the several Employments which are assigned to their Saints.

v. 631. *When her indignant Sons*] These were supposed to be the Souls of those Warriors who arose from the Dragon's Teeth, and fell in a Conflict among themselves.

Are brought young Steers, unknowing of the Yoke, 635  
 And fable Sheep to grace the fatal Stroke;  
 Each Hill and Vale th' unwonted Silence mourns,  
 And ecchoing *Dirce* Groan for Groan returns.

*Tiresias* first (as Custom taught) adorns  
 With azure Wreaths of Flow'rs their tender Horns, 640  
 Then fills the hollow'd Entrance of the Wood  
 With Bowls of Wine and Milk, a mingled Flood:  
 Honey and Blood, the last with trembling Hands  
 He pours, as oft as the parch'd Earth demands.

For *Hecate*, first of all th' immortal Train 645  
 They heap a triple Pile upon the Plain;  
 Three Silvan Structures to the Furies rise,  
 Whose less'ning Summits mingle with the Skies:  
 The last of Pine to *Stygian Jove* they rear,  
 Broad was the Base, the Top advanc'd in Air. 650  
 To *Proserpine*, assign'd to lasting Night,  
 An Altar rises of inferior Height.

The Fabric's Front and ample Sides they strew  
 With Boughs of Cypress, and the baleful Yew.  
 Then with his crooked Knife *Tiresias* trac'd 655  
 The destin'd Mark, and pure Libations plac'd

v. 655. *The Fabric's Front*] The Verses in some Editions of the Original are

Frondes atque omne Cupressus  
 Intexit plorata latus.

Which I think can scarcely be understood. Therefore, instead of *Frondes*, read *Frontes*, which elucidates the whole Sentence, and then the Sense will be clearly this: *The baleful Cypress covered the Top and Sides of the Pile.* This Alteration seems necessary, and it is favoured by the Authority of *Virgil*, who in the 6th Book says,

Ingentem struxere pyram, cui frondibus atris  
 Intexit

Between their Horns : beneath the piercing Wound  
 The Victims fall, and headlong spurn the Ground.  
 Fair *Mantbo* in a Bowl of ample Size  
 Receives the Blood, and to her Lips applies. 660  
 The lukewarm Vitals next the Virgin sought  
 (As Custom and her Sire's Example taught)  
 Thrice round each smoaking Altar she convey'd  
 The sacred Off'rings in a Charger laid ;  
 With Loads of Fuel heaps the kindled Fire, 665  
 And bids the lambent Flames to Heav'n aspire.  
 But, when the Prophet heard the crackling Wood,  
 And felt the Heat, as near the Pile he stood,  
 Forth from his Breast these dreadful Accents broke,  
 The flaming Structure trembling as he spoke : 670  
 Ye chearless Mansions of eternal Woe,  
 And thou, sole Arbiter of all below !  
 Whom ruthless Fate and Chance ordain to sway  
 The *Stygian* Realms, and empty Shades obey ;

*Intexit latera, & ferales ante Cupressus  
 Constituunt.*

The Reader will observe, that *ante* implies the Top or Front, and answers to the Word *Frontes* in our Author.

v. 669. *But, when the Prophet*]. The Reader will do himself a Pleasure by comparing the following Account of these Ceremonies with that of *Lucan* in the 6th Book of his *Pharsalia*. It is evidently copied from the latter, as may be easily discerned from an attentive Perusal of both. I must beg Leave to observe, that the Description before us is more opportune and strongly connected with the Subject than in *Lucan* : Nay, it seems more natural, that *Eteocles*, after such a Complication of Guilt and Wickedness, should be anxious and solicitous concerning the Event of the War, than *Sextus*, who was engaged in a doubly just Cause. I would not be understood to speak in Prejudice of *Lucan*, who has not only adorned his Subject by this Digression from it, but fully compensated for its unseasonable Insertion. Give me Leave to add, that *Saul's* Application to the Witch of *Endor* was owing to the same Motives, and attended with similar Circumstances.

Transport those Phantoms that for Entrance wait 675  
And loiter yet before the gloomy Gate.

May *Charon's* Vessel groan beneath the Weight,  
And scarce restore to *Styx* the mighty Freight.

Nor let the Dead in one promiscuous Train  
Revive, and view the Light of Heav'n again: 680

From fair *Elysium* let the Just repair  
Beneath thy Conduct, and engage thy Care ;  
With thee shall *Hermes* share the due Command,  
Direct their Passage, and exert his Wand.

But let *Tisiphone* the Light disclose 685  
To them whose Crimes deserve eternal Woes,

Without Compunction and Remission shake  
Her flaming Torch and open ev'ry Snake ;  
Let *Cerberus* his usual Rage restrain,  
And yield the Passage to the guilty Train. 690

Of these innumerable is the Throng,  
And yet the greatest Part to *Thebes* belong.  
He paus'd, unmov'd, and resolutely bent  
To prove the Issue, and await th' Event :  
Nor was the Nymph deficient in her Part, 695  
For *Phabus* had inur'd her tender Heart.

*Eteocles* alone was seen to fear ;  
Convuls'd his Limbs, and pale his Cheeks appear.  
One while the Prophet's aged Hands he press'd,  
The Mantle then, that grac'd his awful Breast. 700

v. 685. *With thee shall Hermes*] *Horace* assigns this God to the same Office.

Tu pias lætis animas reponis  
Sedibus : virgæque levem coerces  
Auræa turbam, superis Decorum  
Gratus, et imis.

Would Decency permit he fain would shun  
 The Sequel, nor conclude the Rites begun.  
 Thus, when the bold *Gatulian* from afar  
 Hears the rous'd Lion rushing to the War,  
 Asham'd to fly, nor daring to advance, 705  
 He stands unmov'd, and grasps the sweating Lance.  
 His Doubts to Fears, his Fears to Anguish grow,  
 As nearer he perceives the wrathful Foe;  
 So fierce he thunders through the rustling Wood,  
 So loud he roars, and speaks his Lust of Food. 710  
 But old *Tiresias*, impotent to bear  
 This seeming Scorn, repeats his former Pray'r :  
 Ye Pow'rs, for whom these pure Libations flow,  
 And Heav'n and Earth with sacred Splendors glow,  
 Attest the fatal Truth of what I say, 715  
 And learn, our Charge admits of no Delay.  
 Say, am I yet, ye sullen Fiends obey'd,  
 Or must I call *Thessalian* Hags to aid ?  
 Whose potent Charms, and mystic Verse shall shake  
 The Realms of *Æther*, and the *Stygian* Lake : 720  
 Disclose your Will, ye Sisters of Despair,  
 Say, do these just Commands employ your Care ?  
 Shall Earth's weak Barrier with a Yawn give Way,  
 And join the upper and the nether Day ;  
 (Since you refuse to bid the Dead return, 725  
 And leave inviolate each loaded Urn)

v. 701. *Would Decency permit*] Never was the Influence of Con-  
 science better proved, than in this Description of *Eteocles's* Conduct.  
 His Timidity first spurs him on to learn the Fortune of the War by  
 Necromancy ; but when the Rites are almost finished, and the Hour  
 drawing on that must determine his future Happiness or Misery ; the  
 Horrors of Guilt increase so much upon him, that he would fain  
 have retired, well assured in himself, that he had no Reason to ex-  
 pect, and consequently should find nothing in his Favour.

Or will ye cut and maim the bloodless Head,  
 And cull the Fibres of the recent Dead ?  
 Ill ye despise th' Infirmities of Age  
 Which yet retains the fatal Pow'r to rage. 730  
 We know, whate'er you labour to conceal,  
 And can, at Will, those Mysteries reveal.  
 Our Vengeance lab'ring *Hecate* should know,  
 But pious Awe diverts a while the Blow.  
 Nor does the triple King, whose Name alone 735  
 You hear with Terror, as his Pow'r you own,  
 From us lie hid ;—but Love of calm Repose,  
 The Joy of Age, forbids me to disclose.  
 Here on his threatening Speech the Priestess broke,  
 And thus her interrupted Sire bespoke. 740  
 Forbear these useless Threats, thy Pray'rs have sped,  
 And Hell no more witholds the summon'd Dead.

v. 735. *Nor does the triple King*] In the Works of the ancient Poets we find many confused Hints and imperfect Accounts concerning the Existence of a great, omnipotent and eternal Being, distinguished by the Name of Demogorgon. All I can collect from them amounts to shew, that he was the Father and Creator of all the other Gods ; and, though bound in Chains of Adamant in the lowest Part of Hell, was yet so terrible to all the other Deities, that they could not bear the very Mention of his Name. *Lucan* has mentioned him in the following Verses.

— An ille

Compellendus erit, quo nūquam terra vocato  
 Non concussa tremit, qui Gergona cernit apertam,  
 Verberibusque suis trepidam castigat Erinnyn,  
 Indespecta tenet vobis quæ Tartara ; cujus  
 Vos estis superi ; Stygias qui pejerat undas.

*Spencer* has alluded to the Notion of his Pre-existence to the other Gods, in his Apostrophe to Night.

O thou, most ancient Grandmother of all,  
 More old than *Jove*, whom thou at first didst breed,  
 Or that great House of Gods celestial,  
 Which was begot in *Demogorgon's* Hall,  
 And saw'st the Secrets of the World unmade.

*Elysian* Landscapes shine, expos'd to Day,  
 And yawning Chasms the nether Shades display.  
 Each Grove and sable Stream our Eyes command, 745  
 Where *Acheron* excites the troubled Sand,  
 Where *Pblegethon* his fiery Torrent rolls,  
 And *Styx* the Passage of the Shades controuls.  
 I see their King, enthron'd in regal State :  
 Around the Ministers of Torment wait ; 750  
 I see the Consort of infernal *Jove*,  
 And conscious Bed of interdicted Love.  
 Death from an Eminence surveys the Throng  
 Of Ghosts, and counts them as they pass along :  
 Yet still the greater Part, untold, remains, 755  
 And o'er increasing Numbers *Pluto* reigns.  
 With Urn in Hand the *Cretan* Judge appears,  
 And Lives and Crimes with his Assessors hears :  
 The conscious Wretch must all his Acts reveal,  
 Loth to confess, unable to conceal. 760  
 Let this suffice, (replies the *Theban* Sage)  
 O Guide, and Prop of my declining Age !  
 Little alas ! it here avails to dwell  
 On these sad Scenes, and paint the Woes of Hell.  
 How the fierce Centaur still his Rage retains, 765  
 And Giants howl in Adamantine Chains.  
 To whom is the fallacious Stream unknown,  
 To whom the Toil of the returning Stone ;

v. 759. *The Cretan Judge*] So *Virgil* :

*Quæstus Minoë urnam movet : ille silentium  
 Conciliumque vocat, vitæque et crimina discit.*

v. 767. *The fallacious Stream*] The Crime of *Tantalus* is very well known, and for his Punishment he was placed up to his Chin in a pleasant Stream, without being able to slake his Thirst in it.

v. 768. *The Toil of the returning Stone*] *Sisyphus* was a noted Robber, slain by *Theseus*. In Hell he is represented rolling a huge Stone  
 up

The Pain that *Tityon's* mangled Vitals feel,  
 And sad *Ixion's* revoluble Wheel? 770  
 Once, under *Hecate's* auspicious Cart,  
 Myself explor'd those Regions of Despair,  
 When in each Vein my Blood impetuous boil'd,  
 Nor Heav'n these darksome Orbs of Light had spoil'd.  
 But rather strive a close Access to gain 775  
 To our own *Theban*, and th' *Argolic* Train.  
 Of Milk four small Libations will remove,  
 And force the rest to quit the dreary Grove.  
 But mark attentive, as they pass along,  
 The Features, Aspect, Mien of either Throng. 780  
 Thy Eyes must here supply the Want of mine,  
 And teach me what the Fates and Heav'n design.  
 Swift as the Word, the spotless Nymph obeys,  
 And thrice repeats aloud her mystic Lays;  
 Aw'd by the Sound, the Shades requir'd, appear, 785  
 While others fled, impell'd by sudden Fear.  
 As *Circe* once, and fair *Medea* shone,  
 Now *Mantbo* shines, surpass'd in Guilt alone.  
 Again her list'ning Sire she thus bespake:  
*Agenor's* Son first quits the bloody Lake; 790  
 With him appears the Partner of his Bed,  
 Two crested Serpents hiss on either's Head.

up a Hill, which rolling down again, affords him perpetual Trouble and Vexation.

v. 769. *The Pain*] *Tityon* made an Attempt to ravish *Laius*; and fell by the Arrows of *Apollo*. He is described by the Poets with a Vulture perpetually gnawing his Liver.

v. 770. *Ixion's Wheel*] *Ixion*, boasting that he had lain with *Juno*, was struck down to Hell with a Thunderbolt, and chained to a Wheel, whose perpetual Rotation was a perpetual Source of Anguish and Torment.



# BOOK IV. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 171

A Troop of Earth-born Youths, in Arms renown'd,  
The wretched Pair with hideous Din furround.

The same Day's Sun, that, rising, gave them Birth 795  
Setting, restor'd them to their Mother Earth.

Fiercely they menace, fiercer yet engage,  
And breathe Revenge, and unavailing Rage;  
No more they seek Admittance to the Flood,

• But wish to slake their Thirst in mutual Blood. 800

The next in Order, as they pass along,  
Vary in Sex and Age, a mingled Throng.

*Autonee* the first, is bath'd in Tears,  
And *Semele* the Bolt, she merits, fears.

With Eyes inverted, *Isa* shuns the Foe, 805

And presses to her Breast the Source of Woe.

Here sad *Agave*, as her Sense returns,

In penitential Weeds her *Pentheus* mourns;

She breaks her *Thyrsus*, bares her bloody Breast,

And flies to give his wand'ring Spirit Rest. 810

Through *Styx* and ev'ry Lake above he flies,

And where th' impervious Cliffs of *Lethe* rise;

His milder Sire, *Echion* there he found,

To share his Grievs, and ease each rankling Wound.

A mournful Aspect wretched *Lycus* wears, 815

And *Atamas* his slaughter'd Infant bears.

v. 799. *No more they*] The Flood he means here, was the Stream they contended about, and which, according to the Poet, was the sole Cause of their Dispute: though the Hints he has given are not sufficient to entitle me to mention it in my Version.

v. 803. *Autonee*] Was the Mother of *Auton*.

v. 804. *And Semele*] See Note on the 365th Verse of the First Book.

v. 815. *A mournful Aspect*] *Lycus*, according to the Commentator *Lactantius*, gave his Daughter *Mezara* in Marriage to *Hercules*. This so intreated *Jove*, that she made him a Lunatic; in one of his Fits he slew two of his Sons, for which Reason he is represented here dejected and sorrowful. Others

*Aëon* still the Form impos'd retains,  
 And leads the Chace along the dreary Plains,  
 Fleet are his Limbs, o'er Hill and Dale he bounds,  
 And with his Horns repells the rushing Hounds. 820  
 Next *Niobe* majestic stalks along,  
 And shines conspicuous in the Female Throng.  
 With Raptures she recounts her former Woes,  
 Surveys th' exhausted Malice of her Foes;  
 And, pleas'd to find herself secure in Death, 825  
 In loud Reproaches wastes her impious Breath.  
 While thus the Priestess spoke, the list'ning Sage  
 Uprears his hoary Head, depress'd with Age;  
 The Fillets tremble on his awful Brow,  
 And his flush'd Cheeks with youthful Ardor glow: 830  
 No more the Staff his bending Frame sustains,  
 Tall and erect, he stalks along the Plains,  
 And thus replies—O! waste thy Breath no more,  
 The pitying Gods my ravish'd Sight restore:

Others say, he was a *Theban* Exile, and made an Attempt to ravish *Megara* in the Absence of her Husband, who returned Time enough to prevent and punish his Designs with Death.

· v. 834. *The pitying Gods.*] This Fiction of the Poet is founded upon an important Truth of Religion, not unknown to the Pagans, that God only can open the Eyes of Men, and enable them to see what they cannot discover by their own Capacity. Thus *Homer* introduces *Minerva*, as enlightening the Eyes of *Diomedes*.

Ἀλλ' οὐδ' αὖ τοι αἶψ' ὀφθαλμοῖν ἔλκον, ἢ πρὶν ἱπῶν,  
 Ὄφρ' εὖ γυνώσκῃς ἡμῖν Θίον, ἠδὲ καὶ ἀνδρά.

*Iliad*, Lib. 5. Ver. 127.

And *Milton* makes *Michael* open *Adam's* Eyes to see the Revolutions of the World, and Fortunes of his Posterity.

——— He purg'd with Euphrasy and Rue  
 The visual Nerve, for he had much to see,  
 And from the Well of Life three Drops distill'd.

*Parad. Lost*. B. 11.

Book IV. STATIUS's THEBAID. 173

The Mists and Films that lately did involve 835  
 These clouded Orbs, in subtle Air dissolve.  
 I feel the gradual Entrance of the Light,  
 And ev'ry Object shines reveal'd to Sight.  
 With Eyes dejected, and dissolv'd in Tears,  
 Each Phantom of *Argolic* Race appears. 840  
 Stern *Abas* here, there guilty *Prætus* stands,  
 And mild *Phoroneus* lifts his aged Hands.  
 See *Pelops*, maim'd to glut the Tyrant's Lust,  
 And stern *Oenomaus*, begrim'd with Dust.  
 In the pale Aspect of each Patriot Shade 845  
 I see the Fall of *Argive* Pride pourtray'd.  
 But who are they, whose Wounds and gleaming Arms  
 Bespeak them not diffus'd to War's Alarms?  
 An hostile Frown and threat'ning Looks they wear,  
 And to our View their wounded Bosoms bare. 850  
 Alas! too well I know the social Band  
 For those who fell beneath th' *Ætolian's* Hand.  
*Chromis* and *Phœgeus*, skill'd to whirl the Lance,  
 And *Cebthorius* with impetuous Strides advance :  
 Brave *Meon* next his well known Face displays, 855  
*Meon*, distinguish'd with *Phœbean* Bays.  
 From whence this Rage? you tread no hostile Ground,  
 The Gods, not *Tydeus*, gave the fatal Wound :  
 Thus did the cruel Destinies ordain,  
 And human Strength and Art oppos'd in vain. 860

v. 845. *In the pale Aspect*] This beautiful Circumstance is taken from *Lucan*; where the Shade which *Eriphoe* raises to satisfy *Pompey's* Son about the Fortune of the War; says,

— Tristis fœlicibus umbris  
 Vultus erat, vide Decios, natumque patremque  
 Lustrales bellis animas, flentemque Camillum  
 Et Curios, Syllam de te Fortuna querentem.

*Mars* shall again invade the *Theban* Shore,  
 And, in the Form of *Tydeus*, rage in Gore.  
 He spoke: And, pointing to the Blood above,  
 And sacred Wreaths, the Phantoms backward drove.  
 But pensive *Laius* on the dreary Steep 865  
 Of hoarse *Cocytus* eyes the subject Deep,  
 Whom late from Earth *Cyllenius* had convey'd,  
 And render'd back to Rest his troubled Shade.  
 Unmov'd by Sacrifice, or hallow'd Blood,  
 He loiter'd on the Margin of the Flood, 870  
 And, as askance his Grandson he beheld,  
 High in his Breast his Heart indignant swell'd.  
*Tirghis* first the mutual Silence broke,  
 And, turning, thus th' impassive Shade bespoke.  
 Illustrious Prince! since whose unworthy Fate, 875  
 Incessant Woes have vex'd the *Theban* State,  
 Here let thy Rage its utmost Barrier find,  
 Nor pass the Bounds by Fate and Heav'n assign'd.  
 Enough of Vengeance to thy Wrongs is paid,  
 And fifty bleed, to glut a single Shade. 880

v. 864. *And sacred Wreaths*] The Verses in the Original are

Dixit, vittæque ligatis

Frondebis instantes abigit, monstratque eruorem.

*Lactantius*, with the usual Warmth of a Critic, contends, that *vittæque ligatis frondibus* should be referred to the fifty Shades; and I wish he had given us something more to support his Assertion, than his own bare Word and critical Authority; for I must own, I cannot easily conceive, why those fifty Soldiers should wear Chaplets appropriated to Priests and Augurs only. Besides, Reason and the Context itself seem to persuade a quite different Construction, which is this, that he drove them away by showing them the Blood and his Wreaths, which were the Ensigns of his Office and Authority. I would not be guilty of a positive *ipse dixi*, but shall refer it to the Reader's own Judgment to determine between us.

This Description of Necromancy in general, has a great Resemblance with that in the 3d Act of *Seneca's Oedipus*.

Whom

Whom dost thou fly?—thy Son, depriv'd of Sight,  
 And, buried to the World, abhors the Light:  
 What, tho' he still retains his vital Breath,  
 His Pains exceed the worst Degree of Death.  
 But say, by what Inducement led, you shun 885  
 A Congress with his unoffending Son?  
 O stay your Steps, and listen to his Vows,  
 'Tis the last Interview that Heav'n allows.  
 The Lot of either warring Host relate,  
 And be the just Interpreter of Fate; 890  
 If pleas'd, that we may shun the threatn'd Blow,  
 If angry, to afford the Cause of Woe.  
 So shall the grateful Vessel waft thee o'er  
 To the sweet Banks of yon forbidden Shore;  
 For thee the *Stygian* Monarch shall transgress 895  
 The Laws of Fate, and yield the wish'd Access.  
 The Shade, relenting, steep's his paler Cheeks,  
 In the red Stream, and thus the Seer bespeaks.  
 Ah! why am I selected to disclose  
 The various Ills the Destinies impose? 900  
 Sufficient is it to have known the past,  
 And prov'd, that Death alone can bring the last.

v. 891. *If pleas'd*] I believe this Passage requires a little more Illustration than was allowable in the Version; the Sense is, that by *Laius's* relating the ill Fortune of the War (for we must carry the Supposition along with us of its being so) he would gain his Ends, however he was disposed towards his Country; viz. that, if he was a Foe to it, he would have the Satisfaction of hearing them mourn; but, if a Friend, of warning them against the impending Danger.

I must confess myself obliged to *Laërtius* for the true Meaning and Interpretation of this Passage, and should have been at a Loss for a Construction, as the Poet has expressed himself very obscurely.

v. 893. *So shall the grateful Vessel*] See Note on the 414th Verse of the 1st Book.

But, wou'd ye learn, what Woes on *Thebes* impend,  
 Let him, the Author at your Rites attend,  
 Who durst his Father's Blood with Pleasure shed, 905  
 Ascend his Mother's interdicted Bed,  
 Thro' violated Nature force his Way,  
 And stain the sacred Womb where once he lay.  
 E'en now the Pow'rs of Hell he strives to rouse  
 To Wrath, and wearies Heav'n with impious Vows. 910  
 But, since from me alone you seek to know  
 Each mournful Circumstance of future Woe,  
 All I can learn, and all allow'd by Fate  
 With Truth and Accuracy I relate.  
 War, horrid War, the jarring World shall waste, [915  
 And Thousands to their own Destruction haste;  
 Each *Grecian* State her youthful Warriors yields,  
 And ne'er before such Armies hid the Fields.  
 All these shall meet a sure, tho' various Death:  
 Some in the glorious Field shall yield their Breath, 920  
 And others, blasted with ethereal Fire,  
 Or, by the gaping Earth o'erwhelm'd, expire.  
 Fair *Thebes* shall yet be Mistress of the Plain,  
 Nor *Polynices* win the promis'd Reign.  
 But the stern Sire shall triumph in Success, 925  
 And Heav'n and Hell conspire to give Redress.  
 Thus darkly he the Prophecy exprest,  
 Part he disclos'd, the greater Part suppress.  
 Mean while the scatter'd *Argives* bend their Course  
 To *Nemea*, conscious of *Herculean* Force; 930  
 They long to burn, to ravage and destroy,  
 And War and Slaughter are their only Joy.

What

What Pow'r, O *Phœbus*, did avert their Rage,  
 (For scarce the Fame has reach'd our distant Age)  
 Relate, what God obscur'd the doubtful Way, 935  
 And clog'd their promis'd Conquest with Delay?  
 The God of Wine, returning from the War,  
 From conquer'd *Hemus* drove his rattling Car;  
 The *Scythian* here, what Time the Dog Star reigns,  
 Nocturnal Orgies to the God ordains. 940  
 The Hills array'd in youthful Green appear,  
 And scarce sustain the Produce of the Year.  
 To dearer *Thebes* the God pursues his Way,  
 And plies the Lath, impatient of Delay:  
 Impetuous Lynxes bear him o'er the Plains 945  
 With Tigers pair'd, and lick the purple Reins;  
 Behind, a Troop of bleeding Wolves appear,  
 With wounded Bears, and close the savage Rear.  
 Stern Discord, ever ready to engage,  
 With stagg'ring Impotence, and headstrong Rage, 950

v. 933. *What Pow'r, O Phœbus!*] It was customary among the Epic Writers to renew their Invocation to the Muses or *Phœbus* before the Recital of any remarkable Action or Exploit; nor does this Repetition want its Uses: for it not only raises the Dignity and Importance of the Poem in the Eye of the Reader, but serves likewise to awake and revive his Attention to the Subject and Matter in Hand, as it would otherwise flag and fall off in the Course of a long Narration. *Virgil* has made use of this Address in his 9th Book:

Quis Deus, O Musæ, tam sæva iacendia Teucris  
 Avertit? &c. v. 77.

v. 934. *For scarce the Fame*] This is copied from *Virgil*, where in the Invocation previous to his Catalogue, he says

Et meministis enim, Divæ, et memorare potestis,  
 Ad nos vix tenuis famæ perlabitur aëra. *Æn.* l. 7. v. 645.

And again by *Tasso*:

—— Di tant' opra à noi si lunge  
 Debil' aura di fama pena giunga. *Gier. Canto 3. St. 19.*

Attend his Course, and crowd around his Car,  
 Friends of the God, and Partners in the War.  
 But, when he saw the Clouds of Dust arise,  
 Their burnish'd Armour gleaming in the Skies;  
 And knew, that *Thebes* as yet was unprepar'd 955  
 To dare the Combat, or their Rage retard;  
 Astonish'd at the View, he cross'd the Road,  
 (Tho' gorg'd and reeling with the nauseous Load)  
 Commands the Drums and shriller Fifes to cease,  
 And thus begins, when all was hush'd in Peace. 960  
 Behold! *Bellona* threatens the *Theban* Tow'rs,  
 The Queen of *Æther* arms her *Argive* Pow'rs,  
 And from the long Records of distant Age  
 Derives Incitements to renew her Rage.  
 Could not th' Offender's Death, nor Length of Time 965  
 Absolve the Guilt and Horrors of the Crime,  
 When Fire from Heav'n was summon'd to her Doom,  
 And scorch'd the Produce of her fertile Womb?  
 That her exhausted Anger she renews,  
 And the sad Reliques of the Name pursues. 970  
 Yet will I interpose a short Delay;  
 Hither, ye Friends of *Bacchus*, bend your Way.  
 He spoke: his Tigers, fleetier than the Wind,  
 Sprung forth, and bore him to the Spot design'd.  
 The gaudy Sun had gain'd the middle Height 975  
 Of Heav'n, and flash'd intolerable Light:  
 Each Grove admits th' exhilarating Ray,  
 And bares its dark Recesses to the Day.  
 Thick Vapours issue from the steaming Fields,  
 As the cleft Earth a gradual Passage yields; 980

v. 967. *Could not th' Offender's Death*] This was his Mother *Semele*, concerning whom, see Note on Book the 1st, Verse 356.



When, rising from amidst a circling Croud  
 Of *Naiads*, thus the God exclaims aloud.  
 Ye Nymphs, that o'er each Stream exert your Reign,  
 Partake our Honours, and adorn our Train,  
 Assist me to repel our common Foes, 985  
 Nor grudge the Toil, unwilling I impose.  
 Withhold your Sluices, dry the fertile Source,  
 And clog with Dust each Stream's impetuous Course:  
 But *Nemea*'s most, from whence the guided Foe  
 Pursues his wasteful Path to *Thebes* below. 990  
 Let ev'ry Torrent quit its craggy Steep,  
 And disembogue its Waters in the Deep.  
 Propitious *Phæbus* seconds our Designs,  
 As on the Margin of the Deep he shines;  
 The Signs indulgent to our Toils arise, 995  
 And the fierce Dog-star fires th' autumnal Skies.  
 Hence to your liquid Caves awhile retire:  
 Your Presence soon we shall again require,  
 When your past Toils shall claim an equal Share  
 In all the Rites our Votaries prepare. 1000  
 No more the Fauns and Satyrs shall escape  
 Unpunish'd, or effect th' injurious Rape.  
 He spoke: and strait a gath'ring Filth o'erspreads,  
 And binds the Streams suspended on their Heads:  
 No more the Spring its wonted Influence yields; 1005  
 Increasing Thirst inflames the wither'd Fields.

v. 983. *Ye Nymphs*] From the Beginning of this Speech to the Conclusion of the Book, we shall find the Poet exerting himself in a very eminent Degree. The Descriptions are particularly picturesque and lively, the Sentiments noble and elevated, the Speeches nervous and spirited, the Diction daring and figurative, and the Verses easy and harmonious.

Huge Heaps of moisten'd Dust condens'd to Mud  
 Charge the discolour'd Channel of the Flood.  
 Pale *Ceres* sickens on the barren Soil,  
 And wither'd Ears elude the Peasant's Toil. 1010  
 The Flocks on the fallacious Margin stood,  
 And mourn th' unwonted Absence of the Flood.  
 Thus, when the *Nile* suspends his rapid Course,  
 And seeks with refluxing Waves his distant Source ;  
 In spacious Caves recruits his liquid Pow'rs, 1015  
 And at each Mouth imbibes the wintry Show'rs :  
 The riven Earth with issuing Vapours smokes,  
 And *Egypt* long in vain his Aid invokes ;  
 Till, at the World's united Pray'r, again  
 He spreads a golden Harvest on the Plain. 1020  
*Lyrcus*, and the guilty *Lerna* fly  
 To distant Realms, and leave their Channels dry.  
 No more *Charadrus* with tumultuous Sound  
 Whirls his white Foam, and floating Rocks around.  
 With softer Murmurs rough *Asterion* flows ; 1025  
 And *Erasine* no more Confinement knows,  
 Who late in Sounds that match'd the noisy Deep  
 Or Thunder, broke the Shepherd's envied Sleep.  
*Langia* only, as the God ordain'd  
 Preserves his Stream with Dust and Filth unstain'd ; 1030  
*Langia*, yet unknown to vulgar Fame,  
 Nor glorying in the slaughter'd Infant's Name.  
 Inviolat the Grove and Spring remain,  
 And all their wonted Properties retain.

v. 1013. *Thus when the Nile*] This Comparison is drawn agree-  
 able to Truth and the general Observation of Travellers. The best  
 Comment upon it is in the 10th Book of *Lucan's Pharsalia*, where  
 the Poet introduces a Dialogue between *Cæsar* and *Achæus* con-  
 cerning the Source and Origin of the *Nile*.

But O! what Honours the fair Nymph await, 1035  
 When *Greece*, to solemnize her Infant's Fate,  
 Shall institute triennial Feasts and Games,  
 And Ages hence record their sacred Names.  
 No more the Plates their swelling Chests confine,  
 No more the Bucklers on their Shoulders shine: 1040  
 The Fever spreads thro' each interior Part.  
 And from the Mouth invades the beating Heart.  
 With raging Pain their with'ring Entrails burn,  
 And fiery Breathings from their Lungs return.  
 The shrinking Veins contract their purple Flood,  
 Nor feel the circling Motion of the Blood. 1050  
 The gaping Earth exhales unwholesome Steams,  
 Resolv'd to Dust by *Sol's* increasing Beams.  
 The thirsty Steed, impatient of the Reins,  
 In wild Disorder scours along the Plains.

v. 1035. *O! what Honours*] A Gentleman, who has made some Figure in the literary World, in perusing these Lines with me, blamed our Author for giving us the Outlines of this Piece, which he intended to fill up in the 6th Book, as thinking it superfluous and disgusting. Perhaps however this may be so far from cloying the Reader's Appetite, that it may raise it and make him desirous of seeing the Picture drawn in its full Length.

v. 1053. *The thirsty Steed*] These Lines call to my Mind a beautiful Description in *Lucan*, of this noble Animal in the same sickly State.

Non Sonipes motus clangore tubarum  
 Saxa quatit pulsa, rigidos vexantia frenos  
 Ora terens, spargitque jubar, et surrigit aures,  
 Incertoque pedum pugnat non stare tumultu.  
 Fessa jacet cervix. Fumant sudoribus armi:  
 Oraque projectâ squallent arentia lingua.  
 Pectora rauca gemunt, quæ creber anhelitus urget:  
 Et defecta gravis longe trahit ilia pulsus:  
 Siccaque sanguineis durefcit spuma lupatis. *Pharf. B. 4. 742.*

On the dry Bit no Floods of Moisture flow,  
 In Whiteness equal to the *Scythian* Snow ;  
 But from his Mouth depends the lolling Tongue,  
 Or to the parched Roof adhesive hung.  
 Some, by the King commission'd, Earth explore, 1055  
 And search the Sources of her liquid Store.  
 But all in vain: they view with wond'ring Eyes,  
 Each Channel dry'd, exhausted of Supplies.  
 (Th' essential Property of Moisture gone)  
 The Spring retains an empty Name alone. 1060  
 Nor was there greater Hope of falling Rain,  
 Than if they rang'd the desert *Lybian* Plain,  
 Where *Iris* ever shuns the deep Serene,  
 Nor pregnant Clouds o'ershade th' unvaried Scene.  
 At Length a Ray of Hope dispels their Grief, 1065  
 And cheers them with the Prospect of Relief.  
*Hypsipile*, as through the Woods they stray'd,  
 A beauteous Mourner, haply they survey'd,  
*Opheltes*, in her soft Embraces prest,  
 (Another's Hope) hung smiling at her Breast. 1070  
 With graceful Negligence her Tresses flow ;  
 Her humble Weeds were suited to her Woe ;

*Tasso* has a fine Stanza on the same Subject.

Langue il Corser già sì feroce, e l'erba  
 Che fù suo caro cibo, à schifo prende.  
 Vacilla il piede infermo, e la superba  
 Cervice dianzi, or giù dimeffa pende :  
 Memoria di sue palme or più non serba,  
 Ne più nobil di gloria amor l'accende :  
 Le vincitrici spoglie, e i richi fregi  
 Par, che quasi vil soma, odij, e dispregi. Canto 13. St. 62.

v. 1069. *Opheltes*] Was the Son of *Lycurgus*, King of *Nemea*  
 His Name comprehends the Prediction of his Death by a Serpent  
 ὄφις, signifying a Serpent, and *λεπτός*, which makes *λεπτός* in *lets* Aorist  
 Secund. to kill.

Yet all those studied Arts could not efface  
 Her native Grandeur, and majestic Grace:  
 With decent Mixture in her stately Mien 1075  
 The Captive and the Princess might be seen.  
 Th' *Inachian* Monarch first his Silence broke,  
 And aw'd, the Royal Exile thus bespoke.  
 O thou, whose Features and celestial Air  
 A more than mortal Origin declare; 1080  
 Whom native Heav'n, and boundless Pow'r secure  
 From all those Wants the Sons of Earth endure:  
 Let not an humble Suppliant sue in vain,  
 Whether you left the chaste *Diana's* Train,  
 To grace a Mortal's, or Immortal's Arms, 1085  
 (For *Jove* himself has pin'd for *Argive* Charms)  
 The Squadrons you survey, a pious Cause  
 To raze the guilty Walls of *Cadmus* draws;  
 Yet fiery Thirst our just Designs controuls,  
 Consumes our Vigour and unmans our Souls. 1090  
 Whate'er you grant, with Joy we shall partake,  
 Nor scorn the troubled Stream, or standing Lake:  
 Our pressing Wants forbid us to refuse,  
 Nor leave as yet the Liberty to choose.  
 No more we importune the Pow'rs on high; 1095  
 Do thou the Place of partial *Jove* supply;

v. 1080. *O thou*] The first Part of this Address is a Transcript of *Aeneas's* Speech to his Mother *Venus*, in the first *Æneid*.

O (quam te memorem!) Virgo: namque haud tibi vultus  
 Mortalis, nec Vox hominem sonat: O Dea, certe:  
 An Phœbi soror, ac nympharum sanguinis una?

Sis felix, nostrumque leves, quæcunque Laborem: Ver. 331.

v. 1095. *No more we importune*] I am afraid *Statius* has neglected *Horace's* Advice,

— Servetur ad imum

Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.

O give us Strength to match our warm Desires,  
 And Nerves to second what our Soul inspires.  
 So may this Infant thrive beneath the Care  
 Of Heav'n, and long inhale the vital Air. 1100  
 Yet more.—Should *Jove* our Vows with Conquest crown,  
 And *Thebes* her rightful Lord and Monarch own;  
 For each that scapes the ruthless Hand of Death,  
 A slaughter'd Victim shall resign his Breath.  
 He spoke: a sudden Languor seiz'd his Tongue, 1105  
 Inactive to the clammy Jaws it hung.  
 His Lungs no more their wonted Aid supply,  
 And fault'ring in their Course the Accents die.  
 Pale was each Face with Thirst and with Despair,  
 Fainty they heave for Breath and gasp for Air. 1110  
 The *Lemnian* Princess fix'd her modest Eyes  
 Prone to the Ground, and thus at length replies.  
 'Tis true, O *Greeks*, from Heav'n I claim my Birth,  
 And far in Woe surpass the Race of Earth.  
 Hard is my Lot a Nurse's Cares to prove, 1115  
 And tend the Produce of another's Love;

At least *Adraſtus* seems to deviate from the pious Track he first set out in. The Sentiment is originally *Lucan's*, and I am sorry our Author had the Indiscretion to copy it.

Mentimur regnare Jovem, spectabit ab alto  
 Æthere Theſſalicas teneat cum fulmina, cædes?  
 Scilicet ipſe petit Phœœen? petit ignibus Ætœn,  
 Immeritæque nemus Rhodopes, pinuſque minantem;  
 Caſſius hoc feriet potius caput? (*Speaking of Cæſar.*)  
Pharſ. Lib. 7.

The Lines themſelves are ſpirited and beautiful, and equally impious.

v. 1113. *From Heav'n*] She was the Granddaughter of *Bacchus* by her Father *Thoas's* Side.

v. 1116. *Of another's Love*] *Archemorus* or *Opbeltes*,

While mine, perchance, the Pangs of Hunger know,  
 And crave what on an Alien I bestow.  
 Yet for the Author of my Birth I claim,  
 A Monarch great in Empire as in Fame. 1120  
 But, why do I delay to give Redress,  
 And aggravate with Converse your Distress?  
 Come then, if haply yet *Langia* glides,  
 And rolls beneath the Ground his silent Tides.  
 Ne'er was he known to leave his Channel dry, 1125  
 Not e'en when *Sirius* fires the sultry Sky;  
 Or *Cancer* on his utmost Limit shines,  
 And to the scorching Lion near inclines.  
 She spoke: and, to procure the promis'd Aid,  
 In Haste her Charge on the soft Herbage laid. 1130  
 Then heap'd around the choicest Flow'rs, and tries  
 With lulling Sounds to close his streaming Eyes.  
 Such as great *Cybele*, when erst she strove  
 To sooth the plaintive Cries of new-born *Jove*;  
 Around the Babe in antic Measures pass 1135  
 Her jovial Priests, and strike the tinkling Brass;  
 But strike in vain: the Cymbal's feeble Sound  
 Is in the Infant's louder Clamors drown'd.  
 Meanwhile in childish Sports *Opbeltes* past  
 The fatal Day, of all his Days the last. 1140  
 Onewhile the rising Blades of Grass he spurns,  
 Then, as his Thirst, or Lust of Food returns,

v. 1117. *While mine*] She had Twins, named *Thoas* and *Euneus*, by *Jason*.

v. 1133. *Such as great Cybele*] *Cybele*, or the Earth, was the Mother of all the other Deities. Her Sacrifices were celebrated with a confused Noise of Timbrels, Pipes, and Cymbals. Hence *Horace* says,

Non acuta  
 Sic geminant Corybantes æra.

Recalls his absent Nurse with feeble Cries,  
 Or seeks in Sleep to close his heavy Eyes :  
 To form the Speech of Man he now essays, 1145  
 And harmless Thoughts in broken Sounds conveys ;  
 Erects his list'ning Ears at ev'ry Sound,  
 And culls the tender Flow'rs that grow around :  
 Too credulous to the fallacious Grove,  
 Nor conscious of the Fate decreed by *Jove*. 1150  
 Thus *Mars* on *Thracian* Mountains topt with Snow,  
 Or *Hermes* rang'd along *Cyllene's* Brow.  
 Thus often, on his native Shore reclin'd,  
*Apollo* lay, and youthful Thefts design'd,  
 The Troops meanwhile, impatient of Delay, 1155  
 Thro' Shades and devious Thickets force their Way :  
 One follows, where his fair Conductress leads,  
 Another, urg'd with greater Thirst precedes.  
 While she repeated. as she past along,  
 Her Promises, and chear'd the drooping Throng : 1160  
 Soon as the rocky Murmur greets their Ears,  
 And in full View the grateful Vale appears ;  
 A Stream, the leading Chief exclaims aloud,  
 And waves the Standard o'er the joyful Crowd ;

v. 1161. *Soon as the rocky Murmur*] This is taken from the third Æneid of *Virgil*.

Cum procul obscuros colles, humilemque videmus  
 Italiam, Italiam prius conclamat Achates,  
 Italiam læto socii clamore salutant. Verses 22.

And again by *Tasso*.

Ecco apparir Gierusalem si vede,  
 Ecco additar Gierusalem si scorge ;  
 Ecco da mille voci unitamente  
 Gierusalemme salutar si vede.

Canto 3. Stanza 3.



BOOK IV. STATIUS's THEBAID. 187

A Stream, at once Ten Thousand Voices cry, 1165  
 A Stream, the list'ning Hills and Rocks reply.  
 Thus, when the Pilot on th' *Ionian* Main  
 Discerns the Summit of *Apollo's* Fane,  
 The sturdy Boatman quits awhile his Oar,  
 And hails with joyful Shouts the list'ning Shore, 1170  
 The list'ning Shore returns the deaf'ning Sound,  
 The Rocks remurmur, and the Deeps rebound.  
 Eager to drink, the rushing Crouds descend,  
 Unmindful of their Sov'reign or their Friend.  
 Horses and Charioteers, a mingled Throng, 1175  
 Steed prefs'd on Steed, and Man drove Man along.  
 Here Kings themselves in vain Precedence claim,  
 In Rank superior, yet their Thirst the same.  
 Some tumble headlong from the slipp'ry Rock,  
 Others are whelm'd beneath the wat'ry Shock. 1180

v. 1168. *The Summit of Apollo's Fane*] *Leucas* was a Town in the Isle *Leucadia* in the *Ionian* Sea, now called *Santa Maura*, famous for the Temple of *Apollo*, to which those that were love-sick resorted, and were cured; *Ovid* describes it thus :

———— Quoniam non ignibus æquis  
 Ureris, Ambracias terra petenda tibi.  
 Phœbus ab excelfo, quantum patet, aspicit æquor  
 Actiacam populi, Leucadiumque vocant.

Heroid. Sap. to *Phaon*.

As for the Simile, *Tasso* has copied it.

Così di Naviganti audace stuolo,  
 Che mova à ricercar' estranio Lido,  
 E in Mar dubbioso sotto ignoto Polo  
 Provi l'onde fallaci, e'l vento infido;  
 S'al fin discopre il desiato stuolo,  
 Il saluta da lunge in lieto grido,  
 E l'uno al' altro il mostra, e in tanto oblia  
 La noia, e'l mal della passata via.

Canto 3. St. 4.

The King, to whom before a Million bow'd,  
 Finds not a Subject in the num'rous Crowd.  
 E'en sinking Friendship meets with no Return  
 Of Aid, while each becomes his own Concern.  
 The Stream, whose Surface late was known to show,  
 Clear as a Glass the shining Sands below, 1186  
 Obscene with Filth and gather'd Mud appears,  
 And a discolour'd, sable Aspect wears.  
 The flattened Grass avows their heavy Tread,  
 And bending *Ceres* hangs her drooping Head :  
 Their Thirst no Bounds, and no Distinction knows, 1190  
 The more they drink, the more the Fever glows.  
 Such is the Prospect, when, o'erthrown the Wall,  
*Bellona* dooms a captive Town to fall :  
*Vulcan* and *Mars* with mutual Aid engage, 1195  
 And all is Tumult, Ruin, Blood and Rage.  
 At Length a Chief, as in the Midst he stood,  
 Thus gratefully bespoke the list'ning Wood ;  
 O thou, whose verdant Shades, and envied Grove,  
 Can boast alone the Patronage of *Jove*, 1200  
 Here let thy Wrath its utmost Limits know,  
 Nor pass the Bounds which Heav'n and Fate allow.  
 Not greater was thy Vengeance, when of old  
*Alcides* slew the Terror of the Fold,  
 When in his fatal Gripe the Hero prest 1205  
 The Throat and Windpipe of the Savage Pest.  
 And thou, dispensing Genius of the Stream,  
 Impervious to the Sun's Meridian Beam,  
 Still calm, uninterrupted may'st thou range,  
 And from succeeding Ages feel no Change. 1210  
 Thy Channels no Increase from Seasons knows,  
 From dropping Zephyrs and dissolving Snows ;

Nor *Iris*, varied by *Phæbean* Beams,  
 Refunds the Property of other Streams :  
 From thy own Source recruited with Supplies, 1215  
 Nor varied by each Star that rules the Skies.  
*Lycormas* shall in vain Precedence claim,  
 And *Ladon*, sacred to *Apollo's* Name :  
*Sperchius* shall resign his Share of Praise,  
 And *Xanthus*, favour'd in *Meonian* Lays. 1220  
 But greater Marks of Favour shalt thou prove,  
 And shine in votive Honours next to *Jove* ;  
 Full in the Shade of these encircling Bow'rs,  
 Shall rise an Altar, grac'd with native Flow'rs :  
 So thou but open at our next Return 1225  
 The liquid Treasures of thy sacred Urn,  
 So thus our wasted Strength again restore,  
 And hail us to this hospitable Shore.

v. 1213. *Nor Iris*] The Poet seems to have fancied, the Rainbow drew up Water from the Sea or Rivers, and poured it down again in Showers of Rain : So *Lucan*.

Arcus —————  
 Oceanum bibit, raptosque ad nubila fluctus  
 Pertulit, et cœlo defusum reddidit æquor.

Of all the Books of the *Thebaid*, there is none more pleasing than the fourth. It may be divided into three Parts, each of which has its particular Beauties, and claims a distinct Share of Admiration. The first Part, which comprehends an Account of the warlike Preparation at *Argos*, and a Description of the Troops and Commanders of the confederate Army, is wonderfully entertaining. The second Part, which contains a Description of the whole Art of Necromancy, the Government and different Compartments of the infernal Regions, and a succinct Account of the most celebrated Personages before the *Theban* War, is extremely instructive. The third and last Part, which is the Introduction to an Episode, contains a fine Piece of Machinery in the Distress of the Allies, and is a Mixture of Instruction and Entertainment. In a Word, in whatever Light we contemplate it, we shall find it one of the most correct, diversified and spirited Books in the whole Poem.



**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE FIFTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

**A***FTER the Confederates had refreshed themselves at the River Langia, Hypsipile, at the Request of Adrastus, relates her Misfortunes, and in particular, describes the famous Massacre of the Males, the Deliverance of her Father, the Arrival and Amours of the Argonauts at Lemnos, and her Abdication of the Government. In the mean Time, Archemorus, whom she had left behind, is slain by a Serpent dedicated to Jupiter. Hypsipyle, alarmed with the Screams of the dying Infant, leaves the Army, and is followed by Parthenopæus, whom Adrastus had sent to know the Cause of her Departure. As soon as the Allies are acquainted with what had happened, they march with Parthenopæus to destroy the Serpent. Hippomedon makes an unsuccessful Attempt with a huge Stone, and Capaneus kills the Monster with his Spear. Jupiter, enraged at this, scarcely refrains from punishing the Hero with a Thunderbolt, and, as a Token of his Displeasure, darts down a Flash of Lightning, which falls upon his Helmet. Hypsipile makes a Lamentation over the Infant's Body. Lycurgus makes an Attempt to slay her, but is withheld by Tydeus. This occasions a Riot, which is however quelled by the Interposition of Amphiaræus, who persuades the Army to do funeral Honours to Archemorus in an Oration, which concludes this Book.*

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE FIFTH.

**T**HEIR Thirst allay'd, and fervent Heat of Blood,  
 The joyful Legions quit the shallower Flood.  
 Recruited with the Draught, the gen'rous Steed  
 With louder Neighings seeks the verdant Mead.  
 As now returning Health dispers'd the Pain, 5  
 And lusty Vigour strung their Nerves again;  
 Th' exulting Troops with fiercer Ardor glow,  
 And threat and vow Destruction to the Foe;  
 As if some hidden Virtue in the Stream  
 Renew'd their Courage and extinguish'd Flame. 10  
 Again the Warriors, gath'ring from afar,  
 Move into Ranks, and wear the Form of War;  
 Again each Chief his scatter'd Forces joins,  
 Gleams in the Front, and forms the deep'ning Lines.  
 As Light'nings issue from a sable Cloud, 15  
 Such from their Arms the bright Effulgence flow'd.  
 Thus, Spring returning, from the sultry Coast  
 Of Nile, the Cranes, a thick-embodied Host,

v. 17. *Thus, Spring returning*] This Comparison seems to have been a Favourite among the Poets. *Homer* first adopted it.

Ὡς πρὸς κλαγγὴν γαίαναι σίλοι ἀρσενίδι αἶθερ,  
 αἶψ' ἔπειδ' ἔν χειμῶνα φύγον, καὶ ἀθίσταται ἄμφοροι,  
 Κλαγγῇ τῇ γε πιστοτέρῃ ἐπ' Ὀκεανοῖο ῥοαῶν,

Expand their Wings, and with hoarse Clangors fly  
 To milder Climes, and a more temp'rate Sky. 20  
 Their length'ning Squadrons shade the Plain below,  
 Loud and more loud the piercing Clangors grow;  
 Till to some running Stream they bend their Way,  
 Or bask beneath the Sun's descending Ray.  
 Amidst his circling Peers *Adrastus* stood 25  
 Beneath an Ash, the Glory of the Wood;  
 And, on the *Theban* Hero's Lance reclin'd,  
 Thus to the *Lemnian* Queen reveal'd his Mind.  
 Whoe'er thou art, to whom these Squadrons owe  
 Their Lives, O! make us Partners of thy Woe. 30  
 Honours like these th' imperial Lord of Air,  
 And all th' etherial Host might wish to share:  
 Fain would we learn, what happy Spot of Earth  
 Can boast your Residence and whence your Birth!  
 Tho' Fortune Frowns, impartial Heav'n exerts 35  
 Her Arm of Succour, and your Cause asserts!  
 And in that Air, and Dignity we trace  
 The Rank and hidden Glories of your Race.  
 The Princess bends awhile on Earth her Eyes,  
 And her Relation ushers in with Sighs.

Ἄνδρες Πυργαίοισι φόρον, καὶ κῆρα φέρουσιν  
 Θύελλαι δ' ἄρα καὶ γὰρ κακὴν ἔριδα σπυρίονται.

*Virgil* borrowed it from him.

*Quales sub nubibus atris*

*Strymoniae dant signa grues, atque aethera tranant*  
*Cum sonitu, fugiuntque notos clamore secundo.*

*Tryphiodorus* has imitated it likewise.

Οἷα δ' ἀφ' αἰθέρος μέγαλυνδ' ἀκαστοῖο  
 Χάματος ἀμφὶ πάλαι, γροθίαι σίχαι ἐρέφονται,  
 Κύκλοι ἐπεχμύουσιν ἀλμυρὸν ὄρχαθ' αἰετοῖο,  
 Γαυπτοῖσι ἀρέτῃσι σπινθήρια καλυπτήται.

*Def. of Troy, V. 343.*



The odious Task, O Monarch, you impose,  
 Renews alas ! unutterable Woes :  
 Say, conscious *Lemnos*, how shall I relate  
 Thy Scenes of Carnage and thy Deeds of Hate ?  
 Again the daring Crime appears in Sight, 45  
 And all the Horrors of the fatal Night.  
 Thrice hapless they, whose Breasts the Furies fir'd,  
 And in whose Hearts this impious Rage inspir'd !  
 T'was I, and I alone, who durst conceal  
 My Sire, devoted to the ruthless Steel. 50  
 Let not my simple Weeds and fordid Vest  
 Persuade you to despise your friendly Guest.  
 But why do I divert with these Delays  
 The Cares of War, and military Praise ?  
 Know then, from *Thoas*, great in Arms I spring. 55  
 Tho' flying from the Chains of *Nemea's* King.  
 The beauteous Mourner rises in Esteem,  
 Her Talents equal to the Labour seem.  
 All wish to know the Sequel of her Woes,  
 But chief *Adrastus* urg'd her to disclose. 60  
 While these our Troops unite their common Aid  
 To force a Passage thro' yon gloomy Shade,

v. 41. *The odious Task*] The Length of this Narration is abundantly compensated for by the Beauties of it. The Poet seems to avow his Intention of imitating *Virgil* in his second Book, by ashering it in with almost the same Terms.

— Immania vulnera rector,  
 Integrare jubet ———

v. 61. *While these our Troops*] It sometimes happens (says *Longinus*) that a Writer, in speaking of some Person, all on a sudden puts himself in that other's Place, and acts his Part; a Figure which marks the Impetuosity and Hurry of the Passions. The Poet stops his Narration, forgets his own Person, and instantly, without any Notice, introduces the Person speaking. By this sudden Transition

Nor does the Task require a little Force,  
 So thick the Bushes that obstruct their Course)  
 Each Circumstance of Woe relate anew, 65  
 And from the Cause the dire Effect pursue:  
 What follow'd your Aversion to the Crime,  
 And why secluded from your native Clime.  
 'Tis pleasant to review the Scenes of Grief,  
 And to divulge our Woes a short Relief. 70  
 He paus'd: the captive Princess thus replies:  
 Encircled by the Deep fair *Lemnos* lies;  
 Here weary *Vulcan* wastes his leisure Hours,  
 And recollects in Sleep his scatter'd Pow'rs.  
 The Cloud-capt *Athos* from his length'ning Steep 75  
 O'erlooks our Isle; his Groves o'ershade the Deep.  
 Each fronting Tract of Land the *Thracian* plows,  
 The *Thracian*, fatal to each *Lemnian* Spouse.  
 Once great in Arms and useful Arts it shone,  
 Fertile in Chiefs of Valour and Renown: 80  
 Not *Delos*, or the *Samian* Isle could claim  
 A greater Share of Riches and of Fame;  
 Till Heav'n to punish our Offence decreed,  
 Nor were we wanting to promote the Deed:

he prevents the Reader, and the Transition is made before the Poet himself seems sensible he had made it. The true and proper Place for this Figure is when the Time presses, and the Occasion will not admit of any Delay: It is elegant then to pass from one Person to another, as in that of *Hecateus*.

"The Herald, extremely discontented at the Orders he had received, gave Command to the *Heracidae* to withdraw.—It is no Way in my Power to help you; if, therefore, you would not entirely perish, and if you would not involve me too in your Ruin, depart and seek a Retreat among some other People."

*Treatise on the Sublime, Cap. 3.*

No Temples to the Queen of Love were rais'd, 85  
 Nor Incense on the sacred Altars blaz'd.  
 Thus sometimes Anger stings a heav'nly Mind,  
 And Vengeance sure, tho' tardy, creeps behind.  
 From *Paphos*, where a hundred Altars smoke,  
 And love-sick Votaries her Aid invoke, 90  
 Careless of Dress and Ornament she moves,  
 And leaves behind her Cestus and her Doves.  
 The Moon had measur'd half the starry Frame,  
 When the fierce Goddess with the Furies came :  
 Far other Flames, than those of Love she bears, 95  
 And high in Air the Torch of Discord rears.  
 Soon as the Fiend-engendred Serpents roam,  
 Diffusing Terrors o'er each wrangling Dome,  
 The Loves, or willing, or compell'd by Force,  
 From guilty *Lemnos* bend their airy Course, 100  
*Lemnos*, which dearer to her Consort stands  
 Than all the Cities rear'd by mortal Hands.

v. 92. *Her Cestus*] The Cestus or magic Girdle of *Venus* is thus described by *Homer*.

ἔσθ' αἱ δὲ αἱ θεατλήρια πάντα τίτυκτο,  
 ἔσθ' ἐνὶ μὲν φιλότῃ, σὺ δ' ἰμερῷ, σὺ δ' ἰαχευῆς,  
 Πάρφρασι, ἥ τ' ἔκλειψ' ἰόον πύκα πρὸ φρονέοντων.

There is a singular Propriety in making this Goddess the Authoress of these Disturbances : the Machine is allegorical, and implies, that the *Lemnian* Matrons were excited to such a Degree of Lust, as to massacre their Husbands for their natural Impotency, or affected Continence.

v. 101. *Lemnos*] The Reason why *Vulcan* is said to reside at *Lemnos*, was, because that Island abounds with subterraneous Veins of Fire. He fell there from Heaven, as he himself says.

Πάν ὃ ἤμαρ φερόμεν, ἅμα δ' ἡλίου καταδύντι  
 Κάππιον ἐν Λήμνῳ. ————— Hom. Iliad. B. 1.

Where Philosophers say, that Element has its proper Place. Here it was, that he contrived the famous Chain, which possibly might prejudice his Consort against the *Lemnians*.

Urg'd by no Cause, the fullen Bridegroom fled  
 From blooming Beauty, and the genial Bed ;  
 No more he pays the pleasing Debt of Love, 105  
 When conscious *Cynthia* rules the Realms above :  
 Nor Sleep surprizes with unnotic'd Pace  
 The clasping Pair, and strengthens their Embrace :  
 But Rage and Hate in ev'ry Breast arise,  
 And with his Torch inverted *Hymen* flies. 110  
 The Men (a Plea for Absence) oft complain  
 Of *Thracian* Insults, and demand the Plain :  
 And tho' from Camp their Eyes with Ease command  
 Their native City, and the *Lemnian* Strand,  
 Tho' Nature, oft recoiling, chides their Stay, 115  
 And their sad Children beckon them away ;  
 Stretch'd on the Banks, they rather wish to bear  
 The wintry Storm, th' Inclemencies of Air,  
 And listen to the hoarse-resounding Roar  
 Of nightly Surges, breaking on the Shore. 120  
 Our Sex in social Converse seek Relief,  
 And point to *Thrace*, the Object of their Grief:  
 From Morn to Night the Stream of Sorrow flows,  
 And *Sol* but sets to rise upon their Woes.  
 How blest was I, a Stranger then to Love, 125  
 And all the Pangs, which widow'd Matrons prove.  
 Now thro' the Zenith flaming *Sol* had driv'n  
 His panting Steeds, and gain'd the middle Heav'n,  
 When, tho' no gath'ring Clouds the Day controul  
 Thro' Skies serene portentous Thunders roll ; 130

v. 129. *When tho' no gath'ring Clouds*] This was looked upon by the Ancients as very ominous : Hence *Lucan* enumerating the Prodigies previous to the Civil War between *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, says,

————— Tacitum sine nubibus ullis  
 Fulmen, —————

The Caverns of the smoky God display  
 Thick-steaming Flames, and choak the Face of Day:  
 Tho' mute each Blast, the rough *Aegean* roars,  
 And heavy Surges lash the plaintive Shores:  
 Then grave *Polyxo* thro' the City roves, 135  
 And mourns her widow'd Bed and slighted Loves.  
 Mad as the *Thracian* Bacchanal appears,  
 When from afar the vocal Pipe she hears,  
*Evoe* she cries, and shakes the solid Ground,  
 While ecchoing Mountains answer to the Sound. 140  
 Flush'd are her Cheeks, and haggard roll her Eyes,  
 She rends the desert Town with frantic Cries,  
 And, while the Gates resound beneath her Strokes,  
 To join in Aid th' assembling Dames invokes,

And *Horace* mentions it as a Warning sent from Heaven, to deter him from continuing his former irreligious Course of Life.

————— Diespiter  
 Igni corusco nubila dividens  
 Plerumque per purum sonantes  
 Egit equos, volucremque currum. Lib. 1. Ode 34.

γ. 137. Mad as the *Thracian* Bacchanal] *Virgil* has made Choice of the same Comparison to express the Rage and Madness of *Dido*, when *Aeneas* was going to forsake her.

Sævit inops animi, totamque incensa per urbem  
 Bacchatur: qualis commotis excita sacris  
 Thyas, ubi audito stimulant trieterica Baccho  
 Orgia, nocturnusque vocat clamore Cithæron.

*Æneid* Lib. 4. V. 300.

And *Tryphidorus* likewise.

Οὐκ' ἔτι Θρήϊσσαν εἰς δρυμοῖσι γυναικᾶς  
 Νύμφη· αὐλὸς ἱππῶν οἰκεῖται Διονυσῶ,  
 Ἥτις δὴν παρθέσι παρῶν ἄμα πταίνει,  
 Γυμνὸν ἐπιστῆκε κάρη κυανόμηνυ κισσῶ.

What he mentions of the *Bacchanal's* being roused to Fury by the Pipe, is confirmed by *Apuleius*. *Evantes exiliunt lucitante tibiâ lym- phaticum tripudium*, *Metam.* Lib. 8.

Four death-devoted Babes, (sad Scene of Grief;) 145  
 Hung at her Side, and sought to give Relief.  
 Swift as our Leader, to *Minerva's* Fane  
 We bend our Course, a wild disorder'd Train.  
 Silence enjoin'd, with Confidence arose  
 The daring Authorefs of all our Woes; 150  
 Her better Hand a naked Dagger press'd,  
 And thus her Speech the wrathful Fair address'd.  
 Ye *Lemnian* Dames, dissolv'd in barren Ease,  
 If *Venus* yet retains the Pow'r to please,  
 If empty Marriage-Forms ye disapprove, 155  
 And hate the Name without the Joys of Love;  
 Hear and attend: when Fortune points the Way,  
 And Heav'n inspires, 'tis impious to delay:  
 To Vengeance rise; nor let your Sex be known  
 By Want of Courage, but by Form alone. 160  
 Yet *Hymen's* Privilege we may regain,  
 And Love and genial Joys revive again,  
 Would each the Toil with just Division share,  
 And join her private with the public Care.  
 Three Years have past, since each deserted Bride 165  
 Has lost the sullen Partner of her Side:  
 No more each Debt of Love and Duty's paid,  
 Nor more *Lucina* yields her timely Aid.  
 Prompted by Nature, and by Love inclin'd,  
 The Fishes, Birds, and Beasts increase their Kind. 170  
 Stern *Danaus* his Progeny could rouse  
 To Vengeance for the Breach of Marriage-Vows,  
 And, unrestrain'd with Fears, dismiss the Foe,  
 In Dreams of Terror, to the Shades below:  
 But we; a worthless, servile, heartless Train, 175  
 Had rather brook tyrannic *Hymen's* Chain.

Yet should these old Examples fail to move  
 Your just Revenge of alienated Love ;  
 Copy the *Tbracian* Dame, who durst explore ;  
 Her Spouse's Heart, and drink the rushing Gore. 180  
 Each Doubt, and each Objection to remove,  
 Myself will first the guilty Labour prove.  
 Four Babes, the Boast and Solace of their Sire,  
 Shall first beneath the ruthless Sword expire :  
 Nor shall their Blandishments a Respite gain, 185  
 But interposing Nature plead in vain :  
 While yet they breath, the Author of their Birth  
 Shall crown the Heap, and stain the loaded Earth.  
 What Heroine dares thus far in Guilt engage,  
 And second my Design with equal Rage ? 190  
 Mean while the *Lemnian* Fleet, in all the Pride  
 Of swelling Canvass, cleaves the yielding Tide.  
 This with pleas'd Eyes the fierce *Polyxo* view'd,  
 And thus in Height of Joy her Theme pursu'd.  
 When Fortune calls, what farther can detain, 195  
 And shall the Gods afford their Aid in vain.  
 Our Foes advance, impell'd by adverse Fate,  
 To stain the Sword, and glut in Death our Hate.  
 Late slighted *Venus* in a Dream appear'd,  
 And o'er my Head a naked Falchion rear'd. 200

v. 181. *Each Doubt,*] *Cæsar* has Recourse to the same Argument, in Order to persuade his Soldiers to cut down the sacred Grove of *Messyia*, after he had given the first Stroke himself.

Jam ne quis vestrum dubitet subvertere sylvam  
 Credite me fecisse nefas. Lib. 3. V. 446.

v. 199. *Late slighted Venus*] This Fiction is palpably borrowed from the sixth Book of *Virgil's Æneid*, where *Iris*, in the Form of *Bris*, a *Trojan* Matron, advises her supposed Companions to burn

Why waste ye thus the Bloom of Youth? (she said)  
 Arise, arise, and purge the Marriage Bed;  
 On me alone for other Flames rely;]  
 Each vacant Bed will I myself supply.  
 The Goddess spoke, and on the Pillow laid 205  
 This same (believe me) this same vengeful Blade,  
 But linger on, when fair Occasion calls,  
 And their Ships ride in Prospect of our Walls:  
 At ev'ry Stroke they raise the briny Foam,  
 And bring, perhaps, their *Tbracian* Consorts Home. 210  
 Her Words their Hearts with manly Rage inspire,  
 And spread from Breast to Breast the vengeful Fire.  
 Not greater Shouts the Plains of *Scythia* rend,  
 When the fierce Amazons to Fight descend,  
 When their stern Patron summons from afar 215  
 His Virgin-Troops, and frees th' imprison'd War.  
 Nor Discord, rising from a various Choice,  
 Disturbs their Councils with tumultuous Voice;  
 But equal was their Will, the same their Haste  
 To desolate, and lay each Mansion waste, 220

the *Trojan* Fleet, by affirming, that *Cassandra* had appeared to her for that Purpose.

Nam mihi *Cassandræ* per somnum vatis imago  
 Ardentes dare visa faces. Lib. 5. V. 636.

v. 213. *Not greater Shouts*] Our Author, probably, had the following Simile of *Virgil* in his Eye.

Quales *Threiciæ*, cum flumine *Thermodontis*  
 Pulsant, & pictis bellantur *Amazones* armis:  
 Seu circum *Hippolyten*, seu cum se *Martia* curru  
*Penthesilea* resert; magnoque ululante tumultu,  
 Fœmineæ exultant lunatis agmina peltis.

*Æneid*, Lib. 11, Verse 659.



To strike the Youth, and Sire with Age oppress  
 To tear the wailing Infant from the Breast,  
 And subject to their unexcepting Rage  
 Each Stage of Life, and each Degree of Age.  
 There grew a Forest near *Minerva's* Fane, 225  
 Whose gloomy Boughs obscure the subject Plain,  
 A steepy Mount o'erhangs the nether Glade,  
 And *Sol* is lost between the double Shade.  
 Here they repair, and at the Rites obscene  
 Attest *Bellona*, and the *Stygian* Queen. 230  
 From *Acheron* their Course the Furies bend,  
 And, uninvok'd, the Sacrifice attend.  
 The *Paphian* Goddess turns on ev'ry Side  
 Her Steps unknown, and fires each youthful Bride.  
 Spontaneous then fell *Caropeia* brought 235  
 Her Son (his Sex, alas, his only Fault)  
 A Throng of armed Priestesses surrounds,  
 The Victim falls beneath unnumber'd Wounds:  
 The Life-Blood issuing from a thousand Strokes,  
 With horrid Imprecations each invokes: 240  
 The recent Shade from its dark Prison springs,  
 And haunts the Mother with encircling Wings.  
 Struck at the Sight, my Limbs with Horror shook,  
 The Blood at once my ghastly Cheeks forsook.  
 Thus fares the Hind, by rav'ning Wolves pursu'd, 245  
 As first she seeks the Covert of the Wood;

v. 221. *To strike the Youth*] *Lucan* has described a general Massacre in a similar Manner.

Non senis extremum piguit vergentibus annis  
 Præcipitasse diem: nec primo in limine vitæ  
 Infantis miseri nascentia rumpere fata.  
 Crimine quo parvi cædem potuere mereri.

v. 245. *Thus fares the Hind*] The principal Images which com-

Much she distrusts a safe Retreat in Flight,  
 But more her Strength and Fortune in the Fight.  
 Now, now she seems to feel her seizing Foes,  
 And hears with Dread their Jaws eluded close. 250  
 Mean while, their Anchors dropt, the Ships restore  
 The *Lemnian* Warriors to their native Shore :  
 With Emulation on the Deck they stand,  
 Contending, who should first attain the Strand.  
 Far happier ! had they press'd the *Thracian* Plain, 255  
 Or sunk beneath the Fury of the Main,  
 The lofty Fanes are hid in ambient Smoke,  
 And votive Victims grace the fatal Stroke :  
 But the black Flame and unsound Entrails prove  
 Th' unfav'ring Purpose of the Gods above. 260  
 Late and unwilling to his watry Bed  
 The Sun retir'd, and veil'd his radiant Head,

pose this Comparison, are taken from the following beautiful one  
 of *Virgil*.

Inclusum veluti si quando in flumine nactus  
 Cervum, aut puniceæ septum formidine pennæ  
 Venator cursu canis & latratibus instat ;  
 Ille autem, insidiis & ripâ territus altâ  
 Mille fugit refugitque vias : at vividus Umber  
 ' Hæret hians, jam jamque tenet, similisque tenenti  
 ' Increpuit malis, morsuque elusus inani est.'  
 Tum vero exoritur clamor : ripæque, lacusque  
 Responstant circà, & cælum tonat omne tumultu.

*Æneid, Lib. 12. Ver. 749.*

v. 260. *Nor in their Entrails*] There is a certain Mark in the En-  
 trails, which is called *the God*; and when this appears whole and en-  
 tire, it betokens the Favour of the Gods. But if it is torn and  
 maimed, it shews their Displeasure. *Laſtantius*.

v. 261. *Late and unwilling*] However faulty the Heathen Poets  
 have been in their Descriptions of the Gods, they generally take  
 Care to throw in some Hints of their Abhorrence of Evil, and Un-  
 willingness to prevent or delay at least the Perpetration of it, as far  
 as is practicable, without encroaching upon the Prerogative of Fate.  
 Of this we have a remarkable Instance before us, where *Jupiter*, to  
 testify

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Detain'd by *Jove*; nor ever did the Day  
 So long before survive his setting Ray.  
 The Stars awhile withheld their gleamy Light, 265  
 And sicken'd to behold the fatal Night.  
 While other Isles enjoy their usual Share  
 Of Light, and glitter with the distant Glare,  
 O'er guilty *Lemnos* gath'ring Clouds arise,  
 And low-hung Vapours choak the lab'ring Skies. 270  
*Lemnos*, in circling Darkness lost, alone  
 Was to the sorrowing Mariner unknown.  
 Now from the finish'd Rites they bend their Way,  
 To drown in Wine the Labours of the Day;  
 And, while the sprightly Effence of the Bowl 275  
 Glows in each Vein, and opens ev'ry Soul,  
 With Rapture they recount their recent Toils,  
 Their Victories, and long-contested Spoils.  
 Their Wives alike indulge the genial Hour,  
 Studious to please, and call forth Beauty's Pow'r; 280  
 Then Love's soft Queen (to crown the short Repast,  
 And bless the Night of all their Nights the last)  
 Breath'd in each Husband's Breast a fierce Desire  
 Of am'rous Joys that quickly must expire.  
 T'was dead of Night; the Matrons cease to sing, 285  
 Dumb was each Voice, and mute the tuneful String;

testify his Detestation of the Matron's Project, is feigned to defer the Approach of Night, which was appointed for the Execution of it. *Lucan*, at the Beginning of his seventh Book, says,

Segnior oceano, quam lex aeterna vocabat,  
 Luctificus Titan nunquam magis aethera contra  
 Egit equos, currumque polo rapiente retorfit:  
 Defectusque pati voluit, raptæque labores  
 Lucis: & attraxit nubes, non pabula flammis,  
 Sed ne Theſſalico purus luceret in orbe.

When Sleep, Half-Brother of approaching Death,  
 Steep'd in soft Dews exhal'd from *Styx* beneath,  
 Safe under Covert of the silent Hours,  
 With lavish Hand his opiate Juices pours, 290  
 But not on all : their Ardour to destroy,  
 And watchful Cares the female Part employ.  
 At length, no longer patient of Delay,  
 They rush impetuous on their helpless Prey :  
 And each (a Fury lodg'd within her Breast,) 295  
 Invades her Man, with downy Sleep oppress'd.  
 Thus *Scythian* Tigresses the Herd surround,  
 And leap amidst them with a furious Bound,  
 When, press'd with Hunger, they desert the Wood,  
 Or their fierce Whelps demand the promis'd Food. 300  
 What Act of Guilt, or whose untimely Fate  
 Amidst a Thousand shall I first relate ?  
 O'er *Helimus*, with leafy Honours crown'd,  
 Rash *Gorge* stands, and meditates a Wound.  
 Cloy'd with the Banquet, he retir'd to Rest, 305  
 And puff'd the fummy God from out his Breast ;  
 But Sleep forsook him, e'er depriv'd of Breath,  
 And starting at the cold Approach of Death,

v. 297. *Thus Scythian Tigresses*] I know not whether I need make an Apology to the Reader, for rendering the Word *Lee*, Tigresses, instead of Lionesses, as the Deviation is so small and yet so necessary. At least, I should think the Roughness of the Verse, which a close Adherence to the Original in this Place would infallibly occasion, more inexcusable.

v. 301. *What Act of Guilt*] There is a beautiful Interrogation of this Sort in the first Volume of the *Musæ Anglicanæ*.

Se pandit ingens area.—feu libens  
 Equosque currusque Arviragi sequar,  
 Neronianos feu furores  
 Uta, vocet Boadica Musam ?

He wakes, confounded at the sudden View,  
 And round her Neck his Arms in Transport threw, 310  
 But mourns the social Greeting ill repaid,  
 As in his Chest he feels the driving Blade.  
 Nor yet resenting of his Wound, he prest  
 Th' unworthy Object closer to his Breast,  
 And, struggling in the griping Arms of Death, 315  
 On Gorge dwells, and wastes his parting Breath.  
 Dire as they were, I cannot now relate  
 The Vulgar's countless Deaths and various Fate:  
 Suffice it private Evils to disclose,  
 And measure by my own another's Woes. 320  
*Craneus* fell, a Warrior fair and bold,  
 And youthful *Cydon*, grac'd with Locks of Gold.  
 With these, the Product of an Alien's Bed,  
 I pass'd my early Days, together bred.  
 Next *Gyas* bled, design'd with me to prove, 325  
 Had Heav'n prolong'd his Date, the Joys of Love.  
 Then fair *Æpopæus* met his Mother's Blade,  
 As at the Feast the wanton Stripling play'd.  
*Lycaсте* of her Rage disarm'd, appears  
 And sheds o'er *Cydimus* a Flood of Tears; 330  
 As she beheld a Face of her own Mold,  
 And Hair which she herself had trick'd with Gold,  
 Her Consort slain, her Mother near her stands,  
 Impells with Threats, and arms her trembling Hands.  
 As when the Lion, or the spotted Pard, 335  
 Long from the Woods and Forests are debarr'd,  
 With equal Pain and Labour is renew'd  
 Their savage Nature, as at first subdu'd.  
 The fair *Lycaсте* thus resists in vain;  
 She rushes on him, as he prest'd the Plain. 340

Catches the welling Blood, and to renew  
 His Wounds, by the loose Hair his Body drew.  
 But as *Alcimedé* I first survey'd,  
 Her Sire's pale Visage fix'd upon the Blade,  
 Fear shrank my Sinews, and congeal'd my Blood, 345  
 And on my Head my Hair erected stood.  
 My Father's Image fill'd my pious Mind,  
 Left equal Years might equal Fortune find.  
 From thence in Haste I seek the regal Seat ;  
 Fear aids my Course, and wings my tardy Feet : 350  
 My Sire I found perplex'd with Doubts and Fears,  
 (For now the Shouts and Groans awak'd his Ears,  
 And broke his Slumbers, tho' the Palace stood  
 Sequester'd, and encompass'd with a Wood)  
 The Motives of my Flight I soon disclose, 355  
 And all the Series of preceding Woes :  
 ' Arise, arise, or you for ever fall ;  
 ' Our female Foes approach the regal Hall :  
 ' Nor on our utmost Speed I much rely ;  
 ' The Shaft may yet arrest us as we fly.' 360

v. 243. *But as Alcimedé*] This Circumstance, with many others  
 in this Narration, is taken from the second Book of *Virgil's Æneid*,  
 where *Æneas*, after having just related the Manner of *Priam's*  
 Death, says,

Ac me tum primum sævus circumtetit horror :  
 Obstupui : subiit chari genitoris imago,  
 Ut regem æquævum crudeli vulnere vidi  
 Vitam exhalantem :

Ver. 559.

v. *My Sire I found*] *Virgil* has a similar Passage in the second *Æneid*, Verse 298.

Diversa interea miscentur mœnia luctu :  
 Et magis atque magis (quanquam secreta parentis  
 Anchisæ domus, arboribusque oblecta recessit)  
 Clarefcunt sonitus, atque armorum ingruit horror.

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Struck at the News, the hoary King arose,  
 And left the silent Mansion of Repose.  
 Thro' the least peopled Parts we speed our Way,<sup>1</sup>  
 And, in a sable Cloud obscur'd, survey  
 The Passages, and Streets around dispread 365  
 With Streams of Blood and Mountains of the dead.  
 Here Blades half-buried in the recent Wound,  
 And shiver'd Lances sparkling on the Ground,  
 There tatter'd Robes discolour'd by the Sword,  
 And Heads yet bleeding on the genial Board. 370  
 There Bowls and Tables, floating in a Tide  
 Of Slaughter, we with Grief and Horror ey'd,  
 And Warriors, vomiting a crimson Flood  
 From their torn Throats of Wine and mingled Blood.  
 Here dy'd the lusty Youth in manly Bloom, 375  
 There aged Sires that shar'd an equal Doom;  
 There Babes, whose Infant-Tongues scarce yet began  
 To form in broken Sounds the Speech of Man.  
 Such Scenes of Carnage and Debauch succeed  
*Thessalian* Feasts on *Ossa's* Summit spread, 380  
 When *Bacchus* heats the Cloud-born Centaurs Brains,  
 And fires the Blood that revels in their Veins;  
 With Goblets first, then Weapons they engage,  
 And mutual Deaths arise from mutual Rage.  
 While favour'd by the Gloom, we urge our Flight, 385  
 Propitious *Bacchus* stood reveal'd to Sight,

v. 379. *Such Scenes of Carnage*] For an Account of the Fight between the *Lapithæ* and *Centaurs*, see *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Book 12.

v. 385. *While, favour'd by the Gloom*] *Barthius* has observed that this Introduction of *Bacchus* is an Imitation of *Virgil*, who describes *Venus* appearing to *Æneas* in the following Manner:

— Mihi se non ante oculos tam clara videndam

His Course from Heav'n to yield us Aid he sped,  
 And lambent Glories danc'd around his Head.  
 Full well distinguish'd, tho' no Chaplets bound  
 His ruddy Brows, nor Wreaths of Vine-Leaves crown'd.  
 A briny Torrent flows adown his Cheeks,  
 And thus the mournful God his Son bespeaks.  
 While *Lemnos* shone, defended by the Fates,  
 In Peace at Home, rever'd by foreign States,  
 No Care was wanting on my Part to speed 395  
 Each Enterprize, and make their Toils succeed.  
 Our present Woes the Destinies ordain,  
 And Gods implore, and Men resist in vain.  
 With Tears and Blandishments I sought to move  
 The Sire of Heav'n and thwart the Queen of Love; 400  
 But at her Suit the partial Thund'rer nods,  
 Rejects our Prayers, nor heeds the suppliant Gods.  
 Haste, haste away: 'tis thine, O Nymph to share  
 A Parent's Lot, and make his Life thy Care;  
 Convey him hence thro' yon deserted Gate, 405  
 And seize the fair Occasion, e'er too late;  
 In t'other *Venus*, girt in Armour, stands,  
 And animates to Fight her female Bands.  
 Whence this new Thirst of Blood, this vengeful Flame,  
 That fires the Bosom of so soft a Dame? 410

Obtulit, & purâ per noctem in luce refulsit  
 Alma parens, confessa Deam;

B. 2. V. 589.

v. 401. But at her Suit] This Nod of *Jupiter* was so sacred, that whatever Promise obtained the Sanction of it, was esteemed inviolable, as *Homer* informs us in the following Verses:

Εἰ δ' ἄγε, τοι κεφαλῇ κατακύνεσμαι, ὅφρα πιπίδης  
 Τῦτε γὰρ ἐξ ἐμίδου γι μετ' ἀθανάτοισι μέλιτος  
 Τίκμων; ἢ γὰρ ἐμὸν παλιάρητοιν, εἰδ' ἀπάτηλον,  
 Οὐδ' ἀτιμύτητόν γ' ὅ, τι κε κεφαλῇ κατακύνω.

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BOOK V. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 211

Do you your Father to the Deep attend ;  
 The Task be mine his Passage to befriend :  
 This said, he soon dissolves in Air again,  
 And while black Shades conceal from us the Train  
 Of watchful Females, darts a flaming Ray 415  
 That shone a Guide, and pointed out the Way.  
 With Speed the God's Directions we pursue,  
 And soon in Part the ready Vessel view ;  
 My Sire embark'd, to *Neptune's* watchful Care,  
 And *Æolus* I oft commend with Pray'r. 420  
 No Bound th' alternate Stream of Sorrow knows,  
 'Till beamy *Phosphor*, rising on our Woes,  
 Gave Warning of *Aurora's* hast'ning Car,  
 And deep in Ocean sunk each paler Star.  
 Unwilling then the Vessel I forsook, 425  
 And often backward cast a wishful Look ;  
 'Till now the long-expected Gales arise,  
 And snatch the less'ning Object from my Eyes.  
 At length the Morn, the blushing Morn arose,  
 Whose Beams the Horrors of the Night disclose, 430  
 Black interposing Clouds arise between,  
 And from her Sight exclude the loathsome Scene.  
 Their Actions now expos'd in open Day,  
 The trembling Matrons curse the treach'rous Ray ;

v. 415 *A flaming Ray*] This Circumstance seems borrowed from *Virgil*, who introduces *Jupiter* assisting *Æneas* to make his Escape in the following Lines :

Stella facem ducens multa cum luce cucurrit.  
 Illam summa super labentem culmina tecti,  
 Cernimus Idæâ claram se conderë sylvâ,  
 Signantemque vias ; tum longo limite sulcus  
 Dat lucem, & latè circum loca sulphure fumant.

*Æn. Lib. 2. V. 694.*

Each would her Share of Guilt with Joy disclaim, 435  
 And, blushing meets the Partner of her Shame.  
 They burn the Bodies, or inhume with Speed,  
 And hope in vain to veil the glaring Deed.  
 But when the *Cyprian* Goddesses, cloy'd with Gore,  
 And her fell Co-aids left the captive Shore, 440  
 The Wretches, stung with sharp Reflection, tear  
 Their Locks, and weep involv'd in deep despair.  
 An Island, late enrich'd with *Thracian* Spoils,  
 Fam'd for its Produce, Wealth, and martial Toils,  
 Bemoans the ravish'd Glory of her Coast, 445  
 Her Infants, Senate, and victorious Host.  
 Nor does she this irreparable Woe  
 To Shipwreck, War, or wasting Sickness owe;  
 But her own Hands, the Tools of envious Fate  
 Wrought the dire Mischief, which she mourns too late. 450  
 No more her vig'rous Sons exert their Toil  
 To plow the Deep, or break the stubborn Soil.  
 O'er the whole Town unwonted Silence reigns,  
 And clotted Blood each widow'd Mansion stains.  
 Stern Phantoms, rising from the Shades beneath, 455  
 The Sounds of Vengeance in low Whispers breathe.

v. 439. *But, when the Cyprian Goddesses]* From the present Passage we may see to what a Degree the smallest Circumstance is aggrandized and heightened in the Hands of a great Poet. The Sense of the Allegory is obviously this: when their Rage and Passion had subsided, and gave Place to cooler and more mature Reflection.—This Personification of the Affections was introduced first into Greece by the *Egyptians*, and translated thence to *Italy*. *Valerius Flaccus*, who has slightly touched on this Subject in his *Argonautics*, says, they were infatuated to such a Degree, as to set their own Houses on Fire.

————— *Diras alix ad fastigia tædas*

*Injiciunt, adduntque domos.* —————

The latter Part of this Remark belongs to *Barthius*. Digitized by Google

Within

Within the inner Court in Haste I raise  
 A sylvan Pile, to feed the fun'ral Blaze;  
 On this the Scepter, Arms and Robes, that grac'd  
 The *Lemnian* Monarch, are in Order plac'd. 460  
 With Looks dejected, near the Pile I stand,  
 A bloody Dagger arms my better Hand.  
 My scatter'd Hair in wild Disorder flows,  
 My Habit such as suited with my Woes.  
 Nor Tears, the Token of a wounded Heart, 465  
 Were wanting to compleat the Mourner's Part.  
 To prove their Approbation of the Deed,  
 The *Lemnian* Scepter is to me decreed.  
 (So much my flowing Tears and ready Tale  
 Did o'er each Female's easy Faith prevail) 470  
 What cou'd I do, thus press'd by their Demands,  
 Oft I confess'd my undeserving Hands  
 Before the Gods.—Constrain'd at length t'obey,  
 I take the Crown and mutilated Sway,  
 From hence a load of watchful Cares arose, 475  
 And anxious Thoughts, impatient of Repose,

v. 459. *On this the Scepter*] That this was an established Custom among the ancient Heathens, may be inferred from the following Verses of *Virgil*, where *Dido* is introduced giving her last Commands to her Sister.

Tu secreta pyram testo inferiore sub auras  
 Erige, & arma viri, thalamo quæ fixa reliquit  
 Dextra feras. —————

*Æn. Lib. 4.*

*Philotes* likewise in the *Hercules Oeteus* of *Seneca* says,

Hic nodus, inquit nulla quem capiet manus,  
 Mecum per ignem flagrat, hoc telum Herculem  
 Tantum sequatur. Hoc quoque acciperes, ait,  
 Si ferre posses. Adjuvet Domini regum.  
 Tum rigida secum spolia Nemæi mali  
 Arfura poscit. —————

*Æt. 5. Ver. 1660.*  
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*Polyxo's*

*Polyxo's* Guilt in Visions stands renew'd,  
 And *Lemnian* Horrors in our Slumbers brood;  
 Till Altars to their angry Shades we rear,  
 And by their Ashes with Devotion swear, 480  
 Thus when the Savage Monarch of the Wood,  
 Impell'd with Anger, or Desire of Food,  
 Has torn some lordly Bull, who long had led  
 The subject Cattle, Ruler of the Mead,  
 The headless Herd in stragg'ling Parties roves, 485  
 Unmindful of their Pasture or their Loves;  
 Hush'd are the Fields, the Rivers cease to roar,  
 And the mute Herds their common Loss deplore.  
 But lo! the *Argo*, loaded with a Train  
 Of Heroes, cleaves th' inviolated Main: 490  
 From *Thessaly* the daring Warriors came,  
 Embolden'd by the glorious Lust of Fame.

v. 481. *Thus when the Savage*] Those who always expect in *Statius* those minute Resemblances in every Branch of a Comparison, which are the Pride of modern Similies, will frequently find themselves disappointed in the Course of this Work. He seems so secure of the main Likeness, that he makes no Scruple of neglecting the small Circumstances in such a Manner as to leave the Reader to supply them himself, and seems more desirous of presenting the Mind with a great Image, than fixing it down to an exact one. The Writers of the present Age act in a quite different, though less judicious Manner, and distract and confound the Reader with a Multiplicity of Images, as the ingenious Authors of the *Monthly Review* have rightly observed. Their Poems are not unlike the *Dutch* Pieces of Painting, where the Figures are so thick, that they are lost and confounded in each other. This Simile, however, is applicable in every Particular; the headless Herd answers to the People of *Lemnos*, the Silence of the Fields, Rivers, &c. to that of the Town, and the slaughtered Bull to the Men massacred by the Women.

v. 490. *Of Heroes*] They were sent by *Pelias* King of *Thessaly*, to fetch the Golden Fleece from *Colchis*. The Reader may find their Voyage and Adventures described at large in *Valerius Flaccus* and *Apollonius*, who have both written a large Poem on this Subject only.

On either Side the hoary Billows rise,  
 And work their foamy Fury to the Skies.  
 Like some huge Mountain, white with ancient Snows, 495  
 Or floating Isle, the lofty Vessel shows.  
 Soon as the lab'ring Oars enjoin'd to cease,  
 The hoarse-resounding Deep was hush'd in Peace,  
 From out the middle Ship a Voice arose,  
 (The middle Ship the list'ning Waves inclose.) 500  
 Far softer than the Swan expiring sings,  
 Or *Phæbus*, when he strikes the tuneful Strings.  
 'Twas *Orpheus*, taught by his celestial Sire,  
 To sing in sweet Conjunction with the Lyre.  
 The sprightly Music of his varied Lay 505  
 Drives ev'ry Sense but Hearing far away ;  
 And all, attentive to his pleasing Strains,  
 Forget the past, nor feel the present Pains.  
 To farthest *Scythia* were th' Advent'ers bound,  
 And where the Straits of *Bosphorus* resound. 510  
 The Crew mistaken for a *Thracian* Band,  
 In straggling Troops we quit the dusty Strand ;  
 Like Flocks of Birds, or Oxen, when dismay'd,  
 They hear the Lion in the rustling Shade.

v. 503. *'Twas Orpheus*] The History of *Orpheus* is too well known to need an explanatory Note. It will be sufficient to observe, that he was a *Thracian* by Birth, the Son of *Apollo* and *Calliope*, and murdered by the *Thracian* Bacchanals. The extraordinary Effects of his Skill in Music are thus summed up by *Horace*.

Orpheus —

Arte maternâ rapidos morantem  
 Pluvinum lapsus, celeroque ventos  
 Blandum, et auritas fidibus canoris  
 Ducere quercus.

B. 1. Ode 12.

vs 510. *The Straits of Bosphorus*] The *Bosphorus* is a Part of the Sea, which lies in two different Coasts: the one by *Constantinople* and the other at the Entrance of the Dead Sea.

No Furies were at Hand to reinspire  
 Heroic Thoughts, and wake our dormant Fire. 515  
 We climb the Turret, whose impending Steep  
 Affords a Prospect of the distant Deep;  
 Here Javelins, Stones, and knotty Clubs we bore,  
 And Swords, polluted with their Master's Gore, 520  
 Confine within the Mail our jutting Breasts,  
 And proudly strut beneath the nodding Crests.  
 On fronting *Hæmus* smil'd the God of Fight,  
 And *Pallas* blush'd, astonish'd at the Sight.  
 Then first Reflection with her Fears return'd, 525  
 And their past Actions with Regret they mourn'd,  
 Lest Heav'n, to punish their presumptuous Crime,  
 Had sent the Vessel from some hostile Clime.  
 They now had almost gain'd the sandy Beach,  
 And stood within a *Cretan* Arrows's Reach ; 530  
 When pregnant Clouds o'erhang the boiling Main,  
 And *Jove* descends in sluicy Sheets of Rain.  
 Horror sits brooding o'er the liquid Way,  
 And *Sol* deserts the violated Day.

v. 523. *On fronting Hæmus*] The Epithet *adverso*, which I have rendered by *fronting*, has afforded Matter of Speculation to the judicious *Barthius*, who, inform us, that it is very doubtful, whether it should be applied to the Situation of the Mountain, or the Enmity *Mars* bore the *Lemnians* on Account of their Patron *Vulcan*. With Submission to this Critic's superior Judgment, we must beg Leave to observe, that there is a more natural Reason to be given for the Enmity of *Hæmus* (if we suppose *adversus* to signify *hostile* in this Place, which we very much doubt) *viz.* the Invasion of *Thrace* by the *Lemnians* a little before. *Barthius* had certainly forgot this, or he never would have troubled his Readers with this far-fetched Hypothesis and critical Refinement.

The Reader may judge from this Specimen, how much Patience is requisite to peruse all the Notes and Observations of the Commentators, and learn to commiserate the Translator, who must either do it, or lie under the Imputation of Negligence and Carelessness.

BOOK V. STATIUS's THEBAID. 217

From ev'ry Quarter rushing Winds resound, 535  
 Plow up the Deep, and hurl the Sands around,  
 Surges on Surges roll with hideous Roar,  
 And clash and break, and thunder to the Shore.  
 Obsequious to the Wind the Vessel plies,  
 And, wafted by the Billows, seeks the Skies, 540  
 Or, as the gaping Main at once divides,  
 On naked Sands with swift Descent subsides.  
 The Canvass flits before the driving Blast,  
 And with a Crash descends the wav'ring Mast.  
 The Pilot's Art, and Strength of Rowers Fail, 545  
 Nor Demigods against the Storm prevail.  
 While thus the Tempest's growing Rage demands  
 Their utmost Care, employing all their Hands,  
 From ev'ry Eminence a mingled Show'r  
 Of Stones and Jav'lines on the Ship we pour; 550  
 At *Telamon* and mighty *Peleus* throw,  
 And threat *Alcides* with the *Cretan* Bow.  
 At once with *Mars* and *Neptune* they engage;  
 Some aim the Dart with unavailing Rage:  
 Th' unsteady Motion of the Vessel's Course, 555  
 Their Efforts breaks, and lessens half their Force.  
 The floating Hold of Water others clear,  
 And intercept with Shields the rushing Spear.  
 Nor cease we yet our missive Arms to ply,  
 But rain a winged Tempest from on high. 560

v. 551. *At Telamon*] *Telamon* was the Father of *Ajax* and *Peleus*, his Brother, of *Achilles*. The Strength of *Hercules* is much too well known to require a Note.

v. 553. *Some aim the Dart*] This Default was occasioned by the violent Motion of the Ship. *Lucan* says,

*Incertaque manus ictu languente per undas  
 Exercent.*

Vast Stakes, and an enormous Weight of Stone,  
With Jav'lins recent from the Flames are thrown.

Now on the leaning Vessel they descend,  
Or hissing in the Deep their Fury spend.

In ev'ry Joint the groaning *Argo* sounds, 565

And gapes wide-op'ning with a thousand Wounds,

As when the piercing Blasts of *Boreas* blow,

And scatter o'er the Fields the driving Snow,

The Beasts beneath the fleecy Ruin lie,

And intercepted Birds forsake the Sky. 570

Pale *Ceres* droops reclining on the Ground,

The Mountains eccho, and the Deeps rebound.

But, but as the Light'ning, beaming thro' the Shade,

The manly Features of each Face display'd,

The falling Arms our feeble Gripe forsook, 575

And ev'ry Limb with chilling Horror shook.

v. 567. *As when the piercing Blasts*] *Homer* has a no less beautiful Comparison.

Ωςτε ἰσφάδες φίοντο πίπτεσι θυμῶν  
ἤματι χειμῆρι, ὅτε τ' ἄριτο, μῆτις τε Ζεὺς  
Νεφέων ἀνδροποισι, πφαινομένοισιν τὰ ἂ κῆλα,  
Κοιμήσας δ' ἀνέμους χιὰ ἔμπεδοι, ὄφρα καλύψῃ  
Ἵψλῶν ὀρίων κορυφάς, καὶ παρ' ὄρους ἀκρῆς,  
καὶ πιδία λυττωῖται, καὶ ἀνδρῶν πύονα ἔρσας,  
καὶ τ' ἐφ' αἰλὸς πολλῆς κίχυσιν λιμῶσιν τε καὶ ἀκταῖς,  
κῦμα δὲ μιν πρὸς πλάζον ἐρύκεται, ἄλλα τε πάντ' αἶ  
εἰλύεσθαι καὶ δύπνι δ' ὅτ' ἐπιβόρῃ Διὸς ὄμβρῳ. *Iliad*. B. 12.

v. 575. *The falling Arms*] This Circumstance was a Favourite of the Poets in their Descriptions of the Effects of a sudden Fright.

Τῆς δ' ἐλπίδος γῆρας, χαμαὶ δὲ οἱ ἔκπτοι κερκίς.

*Homer's Iliad*, B. 22. V. 448.

Nuncia fama ruit, matrisque adlabitur ad aures

Euryali; ac——

Excussi manibus radii, revolutaque pensa.

*Virgil's Æn.* B. 9, V. 474.

———Primo qui cædis in ictu

Diriguit, ferrumque manu torpente remisit.

*Lucan's Phar.* B. 2. V. 77.



Prevailing Nature rose in ev'ry Breast,  
 And Tenderneſs, our Sex's only Teſt.  
 Th' *Æacide* firſt ſtrike our wond'ring Eyes,  
 And ſtern *Anceus* of gigantic Size. 580  
 Next *Ipbitus*, who with protended Spear  
 From threat'ning Rocks preſerv'd the Veſſel clear.  
 Then *Hercules*, impatient for the Land.  
 We ſoon diſtinguiſh from th' inferior Band:  
 The Veſſel leans beneath the future God, 585  
 From Side to Side alternate as he ſtrode.  
 But nimble *Jaſon*, haply then unknown,  
 Amidſt his Comrades far conſpicious ſhone.  
 From Bench to Bench inceſſantly he flew,  
 And animates by Turns the drooping Crew: 590  
 On *Ida* now, *Oenides* then he calls,  
 And threatens much th' inhospitable Walls;  
 With Wrath the ling'ring *Salaus* he view'd,  
 And *Tyndar's* Son with briny Foam bedew'd,  
 Nor unapprov' the Son of *Boreas* paſt, 595  
 Who toil'd to fix the Canvas to the Maſt.  
 With animating Shouts the liquid Plain,  
 And ecchoing Walls they ſhake but ſhake in vain.  
 The Tempeſt grows reluctant to their Toils,  
 And from the Tow'rs each ſhiver'd Spear recoils. 600  
 In vain the Pilot plies his weary Hands;  
 The Waves and Rudder hear not his Commands.  
 Whether to Right or Left he turns the Prow,  
 The Labour riſes, and the Dangers grow.  
 Till *Æſon's* Offſpring from the Stern diſplay'd, 605  
 The Olive, ſacred to the martial Maid;  
 And Peace and an Alliance aſks aloud,  
 Tho' interrupted by the noiſy Crowd.

Scarce could the fault'ring Accents reach the Shore,  
Loft in the louder Sea's tempestuous Roar. 610

At length the Storm and War together cease,  
The Waves unruffle and subside in Peace :

While *Phæbus*, issuing from a ruddy Cloud,  
Restor'd the Day, and more serenely glow'd.

From Planks compacted with a furious Bound, 615  
The Warriors gain the late unfriendly Ground ;

And by their Arms and princely Vestments known,  
With Shouts are welcom'd to the widow'd Town.

Their Features undisturb'd with Wrath or Fear,  
Attract our Eyes, and doubly fair appear, 620

Thus oft the Gods (as antient Fame reports)

Resign their Pomp, and quit th' ethereal Courts :

v. 621. *Thus oft the Gods*] The following Simile is exquisitely beautiful, and full of that sublime Simplicity, which *Longinus* commends so much in *Homer*. Had that Critic teen it, he had undoubtedly given it a Place in his Collection, and ranked it with the celebrated Description of *Neptune* in the 13th Book of the *Iliad*, which, if it was not for the Anticlimax at the Close of our Poet's, would not, we believe, be thought superior. There are some Stanzas in a Poem on the King's coming to *Oxford* (where the same Comparison is made use of) which, we think, are imitated from our Author's with great Happiness.

Ille ut superbo Jupiter agmine  
Cinctus Deorum, sæpius Iſidis  
Invisit undas, & fluenta  
Jam Thameſis potiora lymphis.  
Quocunque tendunt, induitur novam  
Natura formam, Floraque pascuo  
Miratur agresti virentes  
Sponte suos properare foetus.  
Vel tecta quiddam majus & amplius  
Mutata præſtant, hic quaſi Carolus  
Palatium præſens creaffet,  
Artificis ſuperans labores.

*Mus. Ang. Ver. 1.*

When to fair *Æthiopia* they repair,  
 And make awhile the genial Feast their Care.  
 To leave their Passage clear, the Seas divide, 625  
 And Mountains, level with the Vales, subside.  
 On Earth a sudden Spring is seen to rise,  
 Nor *Atlas* groans beneath th' incumbent Skies.  
 Here valiant *Theseus*, clad in shaggy Spoils,  
 The Trophies of his *Marathonian* Toils, 630  
 The Sons of *Boreas*, on whose Temples grew  
 A Wing, that flutter'd oft as *Boreas* blew,  
 Great *Peleus*, vanquish'd by his greater Son,  
 The daring Youth, the Pride of *Caledon*,  
*Admetus*, by the God of Day obey'd, 635  
 And *Orpheus*, scarce a *Thracian*, we survey'd.

The Hint of this Comparison was taken from *Homer*, who in the 1st Book of the *Iliad*, says.

Ζῶς γὰρ ἐπ' ὤκιστον μὲν ἀμύμονας Αἰθιοπῆας  
 Χρῆστος ἔσθ' ἑστὶ δαΐτω· οἱ δ' ἅμα πάντες ἱππῆες. Verse 423.

v. 629. Here valiant *Theseus*] *Theseus* was the Son of *Ageus*, King of *Athens*, famous for his Friendship and valourous Actions, among which the Slaughter of the *Marathonian* Bull was the principal. *Minos*, during the Preparations for a Sacrifice to *Jove*, demanded in Prayer a Victim worthy of the God; upon which he sent a Bull of exquisite Beauty. His Daughter *Pasiphae* falling in Love with him, persuaded her Father to preserve him alive, which enraged *Jupiter* so much, that he caused him to go mad: at length being tamed by *Hercules*, he was dedicated to *Juno* at *Argos*, from whence he escaped to *Marathon*, where he was slain by *Theseus*.

v. 631. The Sons of *Boreas*] Their Names were *Calais* and *Zetes*. *Pindar* has given the following Account of them.

καὶ γὰρ ἐκὼν  
 θυμῷ γαλαῖνι θάσσοι ἐν-  
 τιν βασιλῶς ἀνίμων  
 Ζήταν κλέαιν τε παλὴρ Βορέας,  
 Ἄνδρας πῆροισι γᾶτι πι-  
 φεικόντας ἄμφω παρ' ἑσέοις. Pyth. Ode A. Epode 8.

The *Spartan* Twins, alike in Shape and Size,  
 An Error cause in each Spectator's Eyes.  
 A shining Tunic either Champion wore,  
 Each in his Hand a pointed Jav'lin bore. 640  
 Bare are the Cheeks of each, their Shoulders bare.  
 And starry Glories grace their sparkling Hair.  
 Behind his Lord, young *Hylas* tript along,  
 Loft and obsur'd amidst the tow'ring Throng:  
 With Pain his tender Feet the Stripling ply'd 645  
 To match the Demigod's gigantic Stride.  
 And sweating under the huge Quiver bore  
 The Shafts envenom'd with *Lernean* Gore.  
 The *Paphian* Queen repeats her fraudulent Arts,  
 And tempts again with Love our soften'd Hearts. 650  
*Saturnia* too, divulges thro' the Town  
 The Warriors Nation, Rank and high Renown.  
 Then first our Altars blaz'd, our Rites began,  
 But Heav'n and *Jove* are lost in dearer Man.  
 The Gates are open'd to each welcome Guest, 655  
 (Our late Aversion to the Sex suppress'd)  
 The dead is to the living Love resign'd,  
 And sweet Oblivion calms each anxious Mind.

v. 654. *But Heav'n*] This Line calls to my Remembrance some fine ones in Mr. Pope's *Eloisa* and *Abelard*.

The dear Ideas, where I fly pursue,  
 Rise in the Grove, before the Altar rise,  
 Stain all my Soul, and wanton in my Eyes.  
 I waste the matin Lamp in Sighs for thee,  
 Thy Image steals between my God and me,  
 Thy Voice I seem in ev'ry Hymn to hear,  
 With ev'ry Bead and drop a tender Tear.  
 When from the Censer Clouds of Fragrance roll,  
 And swelling Organs lift the rising Soul,  
 One Thought of thee puts all the Pomp to Flight,  
 Priests, Tapers, Temples swim before my Sight.

Then

Then were the Pleasures of the genial Board,  
 And lost Repose by pitying Heav'n restor'd. 660  
 Nor, as her Crime is known, O Chiefs, refuse  
 To hear an artless Woman's just Excuse.  
 By the late Furies of our Sex I vow,  
 And Ashes of my Friends inurn'd below,  
 Unmov'd by Lust, I gave my plighted Hand, 665  
 Constrain'd by Fate, and adverse Heav'n's Command.  
 But he, the treach'rous Partner of my Bed  
 (My Love unheeded, and my Person fled)  
 Adores and gazes on another's Charms,  
 And revels in a *Colchian* Harlot's Arms. 670  
 Returning Spring had now prolong'd the Day,  
 And Earth relenting felt the genial Ray,  
 When fav'ring Heav'n, our nuptial Joys to crown,  
 With unexpected Clamours fills the Town.  
 Myself, constrain'd a Mother's Throes to prove, 675  
 Disclose a double Pledge of mutual Love :  
 One still retains his wretched Granfire's Name,  
 (The most, perhaps, that Fate allows to claim.)  
 Full Twenty Suns have deck'd the Courts above,  
 Since first they breath'd the vital Air of *Jove* ; 680  
*Lycaste* then receiv'd them as her own,  
 From that sad Day their Fortune is unknown.  
 Calm was old Ocean's Face, and southern Gales  
 In rising Murmur's tempt the swelling Sails.

v. 669. *On another's Charms*] When *Jason* arrived at *Colchos*, and was informed, that the Capture of the Golden Fleece depended on the Assistance of *Medea*, he married and afterwards left her for *Creusa*, Daughter of *Creon* King of *Corinth*. *Euripides* and *Seneca* have written a Tragedy on this Subject.

The Ship, impatient for the liquid Way, 685  
 Frets in the Port, and loaths the long Delay.  
 There *Jason* calls the ling'ring Chiefs aboard,  
 And the glad Vessel with Provision stor'd.  
 Oh! had he never touch'd the *Lemnian* Shore,  
 But pass'd direct to *Colchus*, since no more 690  
 My Acts of Kindness his Compassion move,  
 Nor Vows, nor dearer Pledges of his Love.  
 Yet shall impartial Fame to latest Times  
 Transmit his Guilt, and brand the Traitor's Crimes.  
 When now the Sun, whose next revolving Beam 695  
 Must close our Loves, had fought the western Stream,  
 The Groans of the late dreadful Night return,  
 And Rage again and jealous Fury burn.  
 Scarce had *Aurora* chac'd the Stars away,  
 And op'd the rosy Portals of the Day, 700  
 When *Æson's* Son, conspicuous from afar,  
 Plies the first Oar, and leads the watry War.  
 From ev'ry Rock, and Hill's impending Steep  
 We long pursue them o'er the expanded Deep,  
 Till, the Waves joining with the distant Skies, 705  
 Th' excluded Objects vanish from our Eyes.

v. 685. *The Ship*] The Diction in this Place, daring as it seems, is not too bigg for the Sense, but just in Proportion to it. A Man who condemns this as extravagant, can have no Relish for Poetry, since it is the very Soul and Effence of it. 'Tis compos'd of what *Aristotle*, with great Propriety, stiles *living Words*, i. e. such as exalt and enliven the Sentiment. *Homer* often tell us, an Arrow is impatient to be discharged, and a Weapon thirsts for Bloods, which is equally bold and fighty with this before us.

v. 689. *Oh had he never*] This is more moderate than

O! utinam tunc cum Lacedæmonia classe petivit,  
 Obrutus insanis esset adulter aquis.

Though perhaps *Hyppile* had the greatest Reason to complain.

A Rumour spread, that wafted o'er the Main,  
 Old *Tboas* shares his Brother's ample Reign,  
 That all my Sorrow was a Feint alone;  
 And but for Show the Pyres thick flaming shone; 710  
 Stung with Remorse, arose the guilty Crowd,  
 And, for my Share of Slaughter, call aloud.  
 Shall only she (they cry) refuse to bear  
 A Part in Guilt, while joyful we appear.  
 No more believe we, t'was the Fates' Decree, 715  
 Or Will of Heav'n, if she alone is free.  
 Warn'd by these Words to shun their vengeful Hate,  
 I quit the Burden of imperial State,  
 And seek my Father's well known Track of Flight  
 Along the Shore, befriended by the Night; 720  
 But *Bacchus* then was wanting in his Aid,  
 For, as thro' Woods and devious Wilds I stray'd,  
 A Band of ruthless Pirates forc'd aboard,  
 And sold me to proud *Nemea's* haughty Lord.  
 While thus the Queen harangues the list'ning Train, 725  
 And, by divulging it, forgets her Pain;  
 The tender Infant whom she left behind,  
 (So the stern Gods advis'd and Fates design'd)  
 In fatal Slumbers hangs his drooping Head,  
 The Skies his Canopy, the Ground his Bed, 730  
 And, cloy'd with Sport, and weary with his Toils,  
 Grasp'd in his Hand the Grass and *Flora's* Spoils.  
 Mean while, along the Fields a Serpent roves,  
 Earth-born, the Terror of *Achean* Groves;

v. 733. *Mean while*] The following Description of this Animal  
 will not be thought inferior to that of *Virgil* in the second Book.

Ecce autem gemini à Tenedo tranquilla per alta

P

(Horresco

Sublime on radiant Spires he glides along, 735  
 And brandishes by Fits his triple Tongue.  
 An hideous Length of Tail behind he draws,  
 And foamy Venom issues from his Jaws.  
 Three Rows of Teeth his mouth expanded shows,  
 And from his Crest terrific Glories rose. 740  
 The Peasants consecrated him to *Jove*,  
 The tutelary Patron of the Grove ;  
 Whose Altars, rais'd of Living Turf are stor'd  
 With humble Off'rings, which the Swains afford.  
 One while he rolls his curling Volumes round 745  
 The Sylvan Fane, or ploughs the furrow'd Ground ;  
 Then round an Oak his scaly Length he twines,  
 And breaks in his Embrace the toughest Pines.  
 From Bank to Bank extended oft he lies,  
 Cut by his Scales the Waves high-bubbling rise. 750  
 But now, when Earth is furrow'd o'er with Chinks,  
 And ev'ry Nymph within her Channel sinks ;  
 He twists, impatient of th' autumnal Heats,  
 His spiry Length, and wide Destruction threatens,  
 And thro' exhausted Springs and standing Lakes 755  
 In winding Folds his noxious Progress takes.  
 One while he bares his lolling Tongue in Air,  
 Thro' Impotence of Pain and wild Despair,  
 Then crawls, adhesive to the groaning Plain,  
 If haply Dew or Moisture yet remain. 760

(Horresco referens) immensis orbibus angues  
 Incumbunt pelago, pariterque ad littora tendunt :  
 Pectora quorum inter fluctus arrepta, jubæque  
 Sanguineæ exsuperant undas ; pars cætera pontum  
 Pone legit, sinuatque immensa volumina terga.  
 Fit sonitus spumante falo : jamque arva tenebant ;  
 Ardentesque oculos suffecti sanguine, et igne,  
 Sibila lambebant linguis vibrantibus ora.

*Verse 203.*



Where'er he breathes, the blasted Herbage dies,  
 And wasting Poisons from his Hissing rise.  
 Vast as the vengeful Dragon, that around  
 The double Summit of *Parnassus* wound,  
 Till on his Back, that couz'd at ev'ry Pore 765  
 A Stream of Blood, a Grove of Spears he bore:  
 Or he, who round the Pole mæandring glides,  
 And fair *Calysto* from her Son divides.  
 What God, O Infant! thus adorn'd thy Death,  
 And why so soon depriv'd of vital Breath? 770  
 Was it from each succeeding Age to claim  
 Eternal Honours, and a deathless Name?  
 Smit with his Tail, the dying Babe awoke,  
 (Nor was the Serpent conscious of the Stroke)  
 Sleep soon invades his stiff'ning Limbs again, 775  
 And locks them in an adamantine Chain.  
 His Nurse, alarm'd at his half-finish'd Screams,  
 (Such as are utter'd in terrific Dreams)  
 Effays to fly; but, destitute of Force,  
 Her fault'ring Limbs desert her in the Course. 780  
 Too certain now of the portended Ill  
 By various Omens, which her Bosom fill,

v. 763. *Vast as the vengeful Dragon*] The Poets feign this Dragon was a Favourite of *Juno*, and the Keeper of the *Hesperian* Garden: but was afterwards slain by *Hercules*, and translated to Heaven. *Virgil* thus describes him.

Maximus hic flexu sinuoso elabitur anguis  
 Circum, perque duas in morem fluminis arctos.

*Georgics*, B. 1. V. 244.

v. 782. *By various Omens*] *Homer* likewise calls this Impotence and Suspension of the animal Powers, occasioned by sudden Fear, an Omen.

Some strange disaster, some Reverse of Fate  
 Ye Gods avert it) threatens the *Trojan* State.  
 Far be the Omen, which my Thoughts suggest!

*Pope's Iliad*, B. 22. 583.

She rolls her quick-discerning Eyes around,  
 And carefully inspects the fatal Ground;  
 Then lifts her shrill-resounding Voice on high 785  
 In well known Sounds, but meets with no Reply.  
 What could she do?—no recent Marks remain  
 To guide her Footsteps o'er the trackless Plain.  
 Roll'd up on Earth the circling Monster lies.  
 An Acre scarcely bounds his ample Size. 790  
 Him as the Princess unsuspecting view'd,  
 With sudden Shrieks she rends the spacious Wood.  
 Unmov'd, the Monster keeps his former Post,  
 Her piercing Clamours reach th' *Argolic* Host,  
 Sent by the King, th' *Arcadian* Hero learn'd 795  
 The fatal Cause, and with the Chiefs return'd;  
 Soon as the Glare of Arms the Monster spies,  
 And hears the growing Thunder of their Cries,  
 He rears his Crest, and with a fiery Glance  
 Expect's th' Assailant's terrible Advance. 800  
 First floops *Hippomedon*, and from the Fields,  
 Heav'd with vast Force, a rocky Fragment wields.  
 Vast was the Mass of Stone, the common Bound  
 Of neighb'ring Fields, and Barrier of the Ground.  
 As when by vast Machines a pond'rous Stone 805  
 Descending on some hostile Gate is thrown;  
 Thus fell the craggy Rock, but fell in vain,  
 And made a deep Impression on the Plain.

v. 803. *The common Bound*] The antient Poets, to raise our Ideas of the Weight and Magnitude of any Stone, generally call it a Land-Mark.

——— Campo quod forte jacebat  
 Limes agro positus, litem ut discerneret arvis.

*Virgil's Æneid, Lib. 12. Ver. 897.*

The Field resounds, and Leaves and Branches torn  
 Aloft in Air with horrid Crash are borne. 810  
 Tho' late in vain assail'd, my keener Dart  
 Shall thro' thy Scales a fatal Wound impart,  
 Whether thou art the Guardian of the Grove,  
 Or, what I wish, the Property of *Jove*,  
 (The vaunting *Capaneus* exclaims aloud, 815  
 And rushes foremost of the Warriour-Crowd)  
 Swift thro' his gaping Jaws the Jav'lin glides,  
 And the rough Texture of his Tongue divides;  
 The Point was seen above his crested Head,  
 Then stains the Ground with goary Filth dispread. 820  
 The furious Monster, unappall'd with Pain,  
 In rapid Mazes bounds along the Plain,  
 Then, wrench'd the Jav'lin from his bleeding Head,  
 Swift to the Temple of his Patron fled:

v. 811. *Tho' late in vain assail'd*] What a beautiful Transition is this from the pathetic Description of the Death of *Archemorus*!—We are alarmed with the sudden Interposition of *Capaneus*: he breaks in upon us like a Flash of Lightning, and surprizes the Reader, who was unprepared for it. While *Hippomedon* and the other Heroes are content with throwing Stones at a Distance, *Capaneus*, like a true Descendant of *Mars*, advances with Spear in Hand, and not only threats, but puts his Threats in Execution. However, the chief Beauty of it, which consists in the sudden and abrupt Turn of the Address, had been entirely lost, if the Poet had followed the usual Forms and said, 'Then *Capaneus* rushes with his Spear, and begins as follows.'—There are more Instances of this Elegancy in *Statius*, than any Author we know of, as indeed he has a greater Share of Vivacity.

v. 824. *To the Temple*] *Virgil* has observed the same of the Serpents that slew *Laocoon* in his second *Æneid*.

At gemini lapsu delubra ad summa Dracones  
 Effugiunt, sævæque petunt Tritonidis arces:  
 Sub pedibusque Deæ, clypeique sub orbe teguntur. *V.* 225.

Here long he struggles in the Pangs of Death, 825  
 In hissing Threats at length resigns his Breath.  
 Him *Lerna's* Lakes in gentle Murmurs mourn,  
 And *Nemea*, by his frequent Windings worn :  
 Him ev'ry Nymph, that late was wont to bring  
 Her early Tribute from the rifled Spring : 830  
 For him the Fauns were seen to break their Reeds,  
 And tear the leafy Honours from their Heads.  
 E'n *Jove* himself the fashion'd Bolt demands,  
 And scarce withholds his all-avenging Hands,  
 Till the Blasphemer in Process of Time 835  
 Should merit Vengeance for a greater Crime :  
 Yet then a flashing Ray was seen to graze  
 His beaming Helmet, and augment the Blaze.  
 As now *Hypsipyle*, the Serpent slain,  
 Seeks her lost Infant on the spacious Plain, 840  
 Upon a distant Eminence she spy'd  
 The with'ring Grass with Drops of Slaughter dy'd :  
 Hither in Haste the beauteous Mourner flies,  
 And soon, too soon the killing Object eyes.  
 In vain from Words she seeks a Short Relief, 845  
 In vain in Tears to vent her swelling Grief ;  
 Short of its Course the pearly Current hung,  
 And to the Roof inactive cleaves the Tongue.  
 One while she kisses his discolour'd Cheeks,  
 Then thro' his Limbs Life's luke-warm Passage seeks, 850  
 In vain his Face and Breast misplac'd, are drown'd  
 In Blood, and the whole Body seems one Wound.  
 As when the Bird, whose Nest in Search of Food  
 Some Serpent climb'd, and crush'd the tender Brood,

v. 851. *As when the Bird*] Virgil has a beautiful Simile of the same Kind with this in Statius, thus excellently translated by the Duke of Buckingham.

Returning, finds her clam'rous Infants gone, 855  
 And Blood and scatter'd Feathers left alone,  
 She drops the Meat, and spurns the Nest away ;  
 The Grove responsive ecchoes to her Lay.  
 Soon as the Wretch had in her Lap with Care  
 Repos'd his Limbs, and dry'd them with her Hair, 860  
 Her Voice, releas'd from sad Excess of Grief,  
 A Passage found, and thus she sought Relief.  
 O thou, whose Form and Features oft have brought  
 My own dear Offspring's Image to my Thought,  
 Whose soft Caresses could alone abate 865  
 The Pangs of Exile and a servile State:  
 Say, whence these Wounds? what God cou'd thus disgrace  
 Thy faultless Figure, and thy Charms efface?  
 I left thee fresh in Life, in Beauty gay,  
 Engag'd in Pleasure, and amus'd with Play. 870  
 Where now are all those sweet Attempts to speak,  
 The sparkling Eye and Rose-resembling Cheek?

So the sad Nightingale, when childless made  
 By some rough Swain, who stole her young away,  
 Bewails her Loss beneath a Poplar Shade,  
 Mourns all the Night, in Murmurs wastes the Day.  
 Her melting Songs a doleful Pleasure yield,  
 And melancholy Music fills the Field.

*Tasso* has likewise copied it.

Come Ugnuol, cui'l villan duro invole  
 Dal nido i figli non pennuti ancora ;  
 Che in miserabil canto afflitte, e sole  
 Pinge le notti, e n' empie i boschi, e l'ora.  
 Al fin col novo dì rinchiude alquanto  
 I lumi, e'l sonno in lor serpe fra'l pianto.

*Jerusal. Lib. Canto 12. St. 90.*

v. 871 *Where now are*] This is something like that beautiful Exclamation in *Horace*.

Quo fugit Venus heu? quove color? decens

Where are those artful Smiles, that lisping Tone  
 To me address'd, and known to me alone?  
 How to procure thee Slumbers did I toil, 875  
 And talk of *Argo*, and thy native Soil.  
 How have I press'd thee in my folding Arms,  
 And gaz'd and doated on thy budding Charms?  
 Thus sooth'd, I could forget I was a Slave;  
 To thee my Breast, another's Right I gave: 880  
 Now ready to thy Mouth descends again  
 The middle Current, but descends in vain.  
 Nor were there Omens wanting to disclose  
 His Fate, and warn me of impending Woes:  
 Amidst the dusky Horrors of the Night 885  
 The *Cyprian* Goddess stood confest to Sight.  
 But why should I the fatal Act disclaim,  
 And to the guiltless Gods transfer the Blame.  
 My speedy Death shall for the Crime atone,  
 'Tis thus decreed, nor seek I Death to shun. 900  
 Say, could I thus forget my precious Care,  
 While, urg'd by vain Ambition, I declare  
 My daring Country's Fortune and my own,  
 And court the transient Blazes of Renown,

Quo motus? quid habes illius, illius,

Quæ spirabat amores,

Quæ me supererat mihi.

Lib. 4. Ode 13.

v. 883. *Nor were there Omens*] As far as we can infer from the Writings of *Statius*, he was very superstitious. All the Personages, who have a Place in his Poem, lay a great Stress on Omens, and after any Calamity has happened to them, always recollect some Vision that portended it. The Correction that follows has a very beautiful Effect. Upon the whole, we may conclude this Oration to be a Master-piece in the pathetic Way. That of *Eurialus* his Mother in the 9th Book of the *Æneid*, and of *Andromache* in the 22d of the *Iliad* are the only ones that can stand in Competition with it

BOOK V. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 233

*Lemnos*, no more against thy Queen exclaim, 905  
 Our Guilt is equal, our Disgrace the same.  
 If this Intreaty merits your Regard,  
 If my past Service claims this small Reward,  
 Lead me, O quickly to the Serpent lead,  
 Or with your Swords absolve my impious Deed. 910  
 Oh! never may these Eyes behold again  
 The Sire, or injur'd Partner of his Reign :  
 Tho' (what can scarcely merit your Belief)  
 My own would equal her severest Grief.  
 E're from these Hands she take th' ungrateful Load, 915  
 Th' ungrateful Load, unhappily bestow'd ;  
 May yawning Earth a sudden Passage rend,  
 And let me thro' the dark Abyss descend.  
 The Princess spoke, and, frantic with Despair,  
 Deforms with Blood her Face, with Dust her Hair ; 920  
 Then blames the grieving Warriors, in whose Cause  
 She left the Babe, too studious of Applause.  
 And now the News had reach'd the Monarch's Ears  
 And fill'd the royal Dome with sudden Tears.  
*Lycurgus*, on that inauspicious Day, 925  
 From the *Persean* Mountain bent his Way ;  
 Where angry Entrails burnt beneath the Shade  
 To th' unregarding Thunderer were paid.

v. 920. *Deforms with Blood her Face*] This Method of expressing Sorrow was very customary among the Orientals. We have frequent Mention of it in the sacred and prophane Writers. *Homer*, in the 18th Book of his *Iliad* says.

Ἀμφοτέρῃσι δὲ χερσὶν ἔλασεν αἰσχροτάτας,  
 χινύσας κακκίφωλῃς.

And again in the 22d.

Πάντας δ' ἰχθυαίους κυλινδομένην κατὰ κορυφῇ.

v. 927. *Entrails burnt*] These Pieces of Meat were called *Prosefa* by the *Romans*, and divided into three Portions. The first was burnt ; the

All Commerce with *Adrastus* he declin'd,  
 Nor in the 'Council, or the Battle join'd. 930  
 Not void of martial Courage was his Breast,  
 But Piety the Love of War suppress'd.  
 Besides the God's Response, with Council fraught,  
 Long lay revolving in his anxious Thought.  
*Lycurgus* first (the sacred Voice reveal'd) 935  
 A Burial in the *Theban* War shall yield.  
 On this he dwelt, and erring in his Fate,  
 Preferr'd a peaceful Life, and neutral State.  
 Yet, when he heard the Clarion's loud Alarms,  
 Wishes to sheath his Limbs in fatal Arms. 940  
 But soon the doubtful Oracle is clear'd,  
 As the sad Exequies in Sight appear'd.  
*Hyppolyte* the slow Procession leads,  
 Met by the Queen, array'd in sable Weeds.  
 But pious Cares no longer now withhold 945  
 The Father, from his new Misfortunes bold.

the second,, consecrated and given to the Priests: and the third,  
 eaten by the Person who made the Sacrifice and his Family. *Suetonius*  
 in the Life of *Augustus* says. 'Cum fortè Marti rem divinam  
 ' faceret, nunciatâ repente hostis incurfione, semicruda exta rapta  
 ' foco profecuit, atque ita prælium ingressus victor rediit.' See *Ar-*  
*nobius, Lib. 2. Adversus Cent. & Adrian Tarnabus, Adversariorum*  
*Lib. 15. Cap. 7. Bernartius.*

v. 935. *Lycurgus first*] It is very remarkable in Favour of Chris-  
 tianity, that all the Oracles of the Heathens were delivered in so  
 ambiguous a Manner as to admit of a double Meaning. Such was  
 the Answer from the *Delphic* to *Cræsus* King of *Lydia* and *Appius* the  
 Prætor of *Achaia*, who thinking the Oracle had warned him only  
 to abstain from the War between *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, retired into the  
 Country called *Cala Eubæa*, where, before the Battle of *Pharsalia*,  
 he died of a Disease, and was there buried, and so possessed quietly  
 the Place which the Oracle had promised him.



An angry, not a sorrowing Look he wears,  
 And Rage denies a Passage to his Tears.  
 Swift as a Tiger, o'er the Fields he flies,  
 And thus aloud to his Domestics cries. 950  
 Where is this faithless Wretch, this female Foe,  
 That spills my Blood, and triumphs in my Woe?  
 Say, lives she? breathes she yet the vital Air,  
 Seize her, and quick, my Friends, to Vengeance bear.  
 No longer let her well-invented Tale, 955  
 And vain Impostures o'er your Faith prevail.  
 The Monarch spoke, and from the Sheath display'd  
 The dreadful Splendors of his slaught'ring Blade;  
 But interposing *Tydeus* rush'd between,  
 And with his Shield protects the *Lemnian* Queen; 960  
 Then shouts aloud: whoe'er thou art, forbear,  
 Nor tempt the Fury of my thirsting Spear,  
 Him stern *Hippomedon*, in Arms renown'd,  
 Th' *Arcadian* Youth, and *Capaneus* surround.  
 Their Swords, impatient for the promis'd War, 965  
 With-dazling Lustre glitter from afar.  
 To aid their King the gath'ring Swains oppose,  
 And menace their inhospitable Foes.  
 Then mild *Adrastus*, mingling with the Crowd,  
 And good *Oeclides* thus exclaims aloud. 970

v. 960. *And with his Shield*] The Commentators have puzzled themselves to find out a Supplement to the Line.

Impiger objectâ ————— Pectora parmâ

One voting for *proturbat*, another for *prostat*, and a third for *sus-tentat*. Instead of weighing the respective Arguments of each Critic, and endeavouring to settle the true Reading, we shall be content with conveying the chief Idea, which is that of *Hippolyte's* Deliverance, in our Version.

O Sheath your Swords, my Friends, contend no more,  
 Nor stain your impious Arms in kindred Gore.  
 To this *Oenies*, unappeas'd, replies,  
 (The Spark of Anger beaming from his Eyes)  
 Dar'st thou, O Tyrant, lift that guilty Hand 975  
 Against the Saviour of the *Grecian* Band;  
 Will they, who this their present Ardor owe  
 To her alone, resign her to the Foe?  
 Know, that from *Bacchus* by Descent she springs,  
 And claims Alliance with the Race of Kings. 980  
 Is Peace so slight a Favour, whilst in Arms  
 Thy Subjects rise, impell'd with false Alarms?  
 Yet still may'st thou enjoy it, and again  
 These Troops behold thee weeping for the slain.  
 He paus'd: when, now his Wrath in Part suppress, 985  
*Lycurgus* thus the list'ning Kings address.  
 Little I deem'd, that when you bent your Course,  
 To *Thebes*, we too should prove your hostile Force.  
 But come, if social Blood alone can please,  
 On us, our Wives and harmless Children seize. 990  
 From these to Deeds of deeper Guilt aspire,  
 And wrap our unavailing Fanes in Fire.  
 Still for itself will Pow'r superior plead,  
 And sanctify the most illegal Deed.  
 Will future Times acknowledge your Pretence, 995  
 And think you combat in a Slave's Defence?  
 Yet Vengeance waits you from the Pow'rs above,  
 And sure, tho' tardy, is the Wrath of *Jove*.

v. 972. *Nor stain your impious Arms in kindred Gore*] The whole Nation of the *Greeks* was descended from *Perseus*, the Son of *Danaus*, from whom they were called *Danai*.

v. 998. *And sure tho' tardy*] This is a Translation of the following Lines in *Tibullus*, as *Lactantius* has remarked.

He said, and to the City turn'd his Eyes,  
 And there fresh Scenes of Blood and Rage describes. 1000  
 But Fame unrivall'd in the dusty Course,  
 In Fleetness far outstrips the vig'rous Horse;  
 From either Wing she shakes the noxious Seeds  
 Of Discord, as aloft in Air she speeds:  
 While from a thousand Voices she proclaims 1005  
 The Monarch's Vengeance,, and the Crowd inflames.  
 Too credulous, nor patient of Delay,  
 With Darts and Torches they provoke the Fray,  
 Demand *Lycurgus*, and advance in Haste  
 To spoil the Fanes, and lay the Kingdom Waste. 1010  
 The screaming Females rend the vaulted Sphere;  
 And their first Grief is lost in abject Fear.  
 But old *Adrastus*, glitt'ring in his Car,  
 Rode thro' the crimson Ranks of noisy War:  
 The mournful Queen of *Lemnos* press'd his Side, 1015  
 Desist, Desist from Arms (aloud he cry'd)  
 No more let vengeful Thoughts employ your Care,  
 Lo, our Protectress breathes the vital Air.  
 Thus, when the stormy South, and rapid North,  
 From their *Æolian* Caverns issuing forth, 1020

Ah! miseret, si quis primo perjuriam celat,

Sera tamen tacitis pœna venit pedibus.

*Eleg. p. 2. 11.*

1001. *But Fame*] This Description, which affords a signal Instance of our Author's Sublimity, is not the worse for its Conciseness. It is entirely devoid of that tinsel, flashy Splendor (which will pass a cursory View only, and cannot stand the Test of severe Criticism;) and grows in our Esteem from every Revival. The Image of Fame shaking the Seeds of Discord from her Wings, is very exalted, and the Epithet *either* exquisitely beautiful, as it conveys to us the Idea of the two different Conflicts. What we value it the more for is, that it is an Original, and has nothing in Common with that celebrated Description in the 4th Book of the *Æneid*.

v. 10 9. *Thus, when the stormy South*] This Simile is taken from *Virgil*, though the Comparison in the *Thebaid* is the Thing compared in the *Æneid*.

With sable Clouds the Face of Heav'n deform,  
 And Ocean groans beneath th' incumbent Storm ;  
 If *Neptune* in his coral Car appear,  
 And his hoar Head above the Surface rear ,  
 The Seas unruffling spread a level Plain, 1025  
 Exult and own the Monarch of the Main ;  
 And, as the Tempest and the Waves subside,  
 The Shores and Mountains are again descry'd.  
 What God, propitious to her pious Vows,  
 Recall'd the fair *Hypsipyle's* Repose, 1030  
 T'was *Bacchus*, Author of her noble Race,  
 Who sent the double Pledge of her Embrace,  
 For Deeds yet rip'ning in the Womb of Time,  
 Their Mother brought them from their native Clime.  
 Soon as the Warders of the Gates afford 1035  
 Admission to their now less angry Lord,  
 Wafted by adverse Fame, the dire Report  
 Of slain *Archemorus* had reach'd the Court.

Ac veluti magno in populo cum saepe coorta est  
 Seditio, sævitque animis ignobile vulgus ;  
 Jamque faces & saxa volant ; furor arma ministrat :  
 Tum, pietate gravem ac meritis si forte virum quem.  
 Conspectère, silent, arrectisque auribus astant,  
 Ille regit dictis animos, & pectora mulcet.  
 Sic cunctus pelagi cecidi fragor : æquora postquam  
 Prospiciens genitor, cœloque investus aperto  
 Flestit equos, curruque volans dat lora secundo.

*Æneid* 1. V. 152.

v. 1032. *The double Pledge*] *Ovid* confirms our Author's Assertion of *Hypsipyle's* Twins.

Nunc etiam peperit, gratæ ambobus Jason,  
 Dulce mihi gravidæ fecerat auctor onus.  
 Fælix in numero quoque sum, prolemque gemellam  
 Pignora *Lucinâ* bina favente dedi.

*Æas. to Hyps. Ter.* 119.

Therefore,

Therefore, to enhance the Justice of their Claim  
 In the King's Cause, they seek the Field of Fame. 1040  
 So blind are Mortals to the future State,  
 So sudden the Vicissitudes of Fate !  
 But, as the Sound of *Lemnos* reach'd their Ears,  
 They pierce the thick'ning Crowd, devoid of Fears;  
 Discern their Mother in the noisy Ring, 1045  
 And round her Neck, the Tears fast falling, cling.  
 She, like a Rock, stands moveless, nor again  
 Dares trust the Gods so oft believ'd in vain.  
 But, as in them she trac'd their Father's Charms,  
 And saw himself engrav'd upon their Arms; 1050  
 Her Grief abates, and impotent to bear  
 The Change of Fortune which the Gods prepare ;  
 Prostrate she falls, and as on Earth she lies,  
 The Streams of Joy swift issue from her Eyes.  
 To cheer his Issue, from a ruddy Cloud 1055  
 The God of Wine salutes her thrice aloud :  
 The Shouts of *Bacchanals* were heard on high,  
 And Drums and Cymbals shook the lab'ring Sky.  
 At length the Son of *Oecleus*, Audience gain'd,  
 With Words like these the list'ning Host detain'd. 1060  
 Attend, ye Princes, and *Argolic* Bands,  
 To what *Apollo* by his Priest commands.  
 The present Miseries, which we deplore,  
 Were by the Fates destin'd, when of Yore

v. 1055. *To cheer his Issue*] This Fiction seems borrowed from *Virgil*, who introduces *Venus* giving her Son *Aeneas* the same Assurances of Protection.

Ni signum cœlo Cytherea dedisset aperto.  
 Namque improvise vibratus ab æthere fulgor  
 Cum sonitu venit; & ruere omnia visa repente,  
 Tyrrhenæque tubæ mugire per æthera clangor.

The future they dispos'd with certain Hand, 1065  
And bade the necessary Causes stand.

Hence were the Springs exhausted, hence arose  
The deathful Serpent, Author of our Woes,  
Hence was *Archemorus* depriv'd of Breath,  
His Name deduc'd from his preluding Death. 1070

Here we must halt, and consecrate to Fame  
The royal Infant, this his Merits claim:  
Let Honours recompense his early Doom,  
And Virtue pour Libations o'er his Tomb.

And oh ! that *Sol* would lengthen out the Way, 1075  
And clog our Progress with a fresh Delay ;

That Accidents would intervene anew,  
And *Thebes* retreat as fast as we pursue.  
But you, who prove a more than common Fate,  
(Your Son exalted to celestial State) 1080

Whose honour'd Name shall with Oblivion strive,  
And thro' each future Age distinguish'd live,  
While *Inachus* and noxious *Lerna* flow,  
And *Nemea*'s Boughs o'ershade the Fields below,  
Let not your Tears a Deity disgrace ; 1085  
A Deity, tho' of terrestrial Race ?

Far better his untimely Death appears  
Than *Nestor*'s Age, and *Tithon*'s Length of Years.  
While thus he spoke, encircling Shades arise,  
And Night assumes the Sceptre of the Skies. 1090

v. 1083. *While Inachus*] *Virgil* expresses himself in the same periphrastical Manner.

In freta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbræ  
Lustrabant convexa, polus dum sidera pascet,  
Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt.

*Æneid*, B. 1. V. 611.

v. 1088. *Tithon's Length of Years*] *Tithon* was the Son of *Laomedon*, and ravished by *Aurora* for his Beauty in *Ethiopia*, who restored his Youth and Beauty when he was grown old : He was at last turned into a Grasshopper.

**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE SIXTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

**A** *DRASTUS and the Grecian Princes, together with Lycurgus, Euridice, and Hypsipyle celebrate the Obsequies of Archemorus, in which is included a particular Description of their felling Wood, of the funeral Procession, and the Lamentation of Euridice. Lycurgus and his Consort are with Difficulty restrained from leaping upon the funeral Pyre. They throw in Jewels, Gold, live Animals, Spices, and many other Things of great Value. A select Company of Horse and Foot are ordered to march round the Pile. They afterwards erect a Monument to the Infant, on which his whole History is engraved. A-drastus institutes funeral Games, and appoints Prizes to those who shall conquer in them. The Statues of their Ancestors are carried along in Procession, and exposed to public View. Then follows the Chariot-Race, the Foot-Race, the throwing the Discus or Quoit, the Combat of the Cæstus, the Wrestling, and the Shooting with Arrows, which is attended with an Omen, and concludes this Book.*



T H E

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE SIXTH.

**N**OW Fame from Town to Town, wide-wand'ring  
 fled,  
 And thro' th' *Argolic* Towns a Rumour spread,  
 That grateful *Greece* prepar'd funereal Games,  
 And various Meeds, as various Merit claims,  
 Games, in which Nature might be crown'd with Art, 5  
 And Skill to inbred Strength a Grace impart,  
*Achaia's* wonted Rite.——*Alcmena's* Son  
 On *Pisa's* Plain the pious Strife begun,  
 To honour *Pelops*, and with Conquest crown'd,  
 His dusty Locks with Wreaths of Olive bound: 10

v. 1. *Now Fame*] This Book, which is entirely taken up in describing the Games exhibited at the Funeral of *Archemorus*, answers to the 24th of the *Iliad* and 5th of the *Aeneid*. I have given my Opinion of it in the Dissertation, prefixed to this Work, and shall therefore say nothing farther upon its general Merit.

v. 7. *Achaia's wonted Rite*] This short Sketch of the History of these Institutions is a pretty Opening: if the Reader has a Desire of being acquainted farther with their Origin, he may see it at large in *Wess's* Essay on the *Olympic* Games in the first Volume of his *Pindar*.

Next *Phocis*, from the Serpent's Winding's freed,  
 To Youths the Prize of Archery decreed :  
 Then round *Palemon's* Altars much bewept  
 The Time-firm'd Rites were scrupulously kept,  
 Oft as *Leucothœa* her Groans renews, 15  
 And at their Feasts her friendly Visage shews ;  
 Her Woes with Wailings either *Isthmus* moans ;  
*Thebes* ecchoes back her Shrieks and mimick'd Groans.  
 And now the mighty Kings, whose royal Birth  
 Exalts fair *Argos* o'er the foodful Earth, 20  
 And whose illustrious Feats the *Tyrian* Dames,  
 Deep-fighting, hear, and glow with various Flames,  
 Those mighty Kings with em'lous Rage contend,  
 And to the Fight their naked Vigour bend.  
 So Gallies, e'er with lab'ring Oars they sweep 25  
 The stormy *Tyrrhene*, or *Ægean* Deep,  
 In some calm Stream their Oars and Helm explore,  
 And learn their Art, preluding near the Shore ;  
 But, well-experienc'd, tempt remoter Seas,  
 Nor miss the Land, they lose by swift Degrees. 30  
*Aurora* now, in early Chariot drawn,  
 Beam'd forth her Radiance on the dewy Lawn,

v. 22. *Deep-fighting*] The Expression in the Original is *suspirant*, which, in all Probability, was taken from *Horace's* Ode the 2d of the 3d Book.

———— *Illum ex mænibus hosticis*  
*Matrona bellantis Tyranni*  
*Prospiciens et adulta virgo,*  
*Suspiret cheu! ne rudis agminum, &c.*

Upon which Mr. *Francis* seems to think, that the Image is drawn from the 3d Book of *Homer's Iliad*, where *Helen* and the *Trojan* Dames appear upon the Walls to view the Camp of the *Greeks*.

Whilst

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Whilst Sleep with Grief beheld his empty'd Horn,  
And paler *Phæbe* fled th' Approach of Morn.  
With Yells the Streets, with Groans the mournful  
Courts 35

Rebellow.—Eccho with their Sorrow sports;  
From Hill to Hill, from Grove to Grove she bounds,  
And catches, breaks, and multiplies the Sounds.  
The Badge of Honour from his Forehead torn,  
The Father sits all chearless and forlorn, 40  
In Weeds of Woe array'd, and o'er his Head,  
And Length of Beard a Show'r of Ashes spread.  
Oppos'd to him, the childless Mother raves,  
And far out-weeps her Lord.—The female Slaves,  
Inspir'd by her Example and Command 50  
With brimful Eyes around their Mistress stand:  
Fain would she fall upon her Son's Remains,  
While each with friendly Words her Rage restrains.  
Rous'd by her Clamours too, the Father springs  
To sooth her Anguish.—Soon as th' *Argive* Kings, 50  
Known by their awful Looks and god-like Port,  
Had pass'd the Threshold of the dreary Court,  
They bare afresh their Bosoms,, and renew  
Their Cries, tho' weary: Tears their Cheeks bedew

v. 50. *Soon as the Argive King*] The Editor of *Pitt's Virgil* observes, that this Circumstance is imitated from the 11th Book of the *Æneid*, Verse 36.

Ut vero Æneas foribus sese intulit altis,  
Ingentem gemitum tunsis ad sidera tollunt  
Pectoribus, mæstoque immergit regia luctu.

*Catrou* remarks on this Passage, that it was a Ceremony among the Antients, to renew their Lamentations at the Approach of a King or Person of Distinction.

With Drop succeeding Drop. Their Shrieks rebound 55  
 From ev'ry Door with emulated Sound,  
 As if the Serpent had reviv'd again,  
 Or with a recent Wound the Infant slain.  
 The *Greeks* perceiv'd the Odium, they design'd,  
 And wept the Weakness, common to their Kind. 60  
*Adrastus*, oft as stupifying Grief  
 Imposes Silence, strives to yield Relief  
 To the distracted Sire with soft Discourse:  
 One while he shews how vain is human Force,  
 How hard the Lot of Man. He next explains. 65  
 The Stableness of all that Fate ordains;  
 And bids him not despair, since fav'ring *Jove*  
 May bless the future Pledges of his Love.  
 In vain he urg'd: unknowing Check or Bound,  
 Their Complaints return'd.—In sullen Silence frown'd 70  
 Th' obdurate Sire, insensible of all:  
 So fell *Ionian* Waves, when Seamen call  
 For Mercy, their repeated Vows regard:  
 So slender Clouds the Light'ning's Flight retard.  
 Mean while they crown with Cypress, Sign of Dread, 75  
 And baleful Yew the Flame-devoted Bier,

Y. 72. *So fell Ionian Waves, when Seamen call*] This seems to be copied from the sixth Book of *Virgil's Æneid*, Verse 467, where *Æneas* accosts *Dido* in the Infernal Regions, and meets with a Rebuff from that Lady.

Talibus Æneas ardentem et torva tuentem  
 Lenibat dictis animum, lacrymasque ciebat.  
 Illa solo fixos oculos, averſa tenebat:  
 Nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur,  
 Quam si dura ſilex, aut ſtet Marpeſia cautes.

Y. 75, *Mean while they crown with Cypress, Sign of Dread.*] This Description, exclusive of its poetical Merit, is a valuable Piece of Antiquity, as it lets us into the Knowledge of the Manner of the  
 Grecian.

And Infant's Bed : the nether Part receives,  
 The Rustics' Gift, a Heap of Straw and Leaves :  
 The second Row displays the various Pow'rs  
 Of Art, embroider'd o'er with short-liv'd Flow'rs ; 80  
*Arabian* Spices on the third they strew,  
 And *Eastern* Sweet's in lavish Plenty shew ;  
 Incense of antient Date, yet free from Hoar,  
 And Cinnamon, that grew, when *Belus* bore  
 The regal Sway.—A Carpet wrought of Gold 85  
 And richest *Tyrian* Die, they next unfold,  
 And laid it on the Top : from far it shone,  
 Instarr'd with Gems, and many a precious Stone.  
 Amidst *Acanthus* *Linus* was inweav'd :  
 The deathful Dogs their panting Bosoms heav'd. 90  
 The Mother held the wond'rous Work in Hate,  
 And deem'd it om'nous of her Infant's Fate.  
 Arms too, and Trophies, by their Granfires won  
 In Fight, where oft the Victor is undone,  
 They hung around ; more proper these to grace 95  
 Some honour'd Hero of gigantic Race :  
 But vain and barren Fame in Grief can please,  
 And Gifts the Babe's much honour'd Shade appease.  
 Hence mournful Joys and Rev'rence to their Tears  
 Arise, and Presents greater than his Years, 100  
 Are brought to dignify the fun'ral Pyre :  
 For flush'd with early Hopes, the fondling Sire  
 Devoted Quivers, Shafts, and shorter Darts,  
 Untaught as yet to act their guilty Parts.

*Grecian* Funerals. I hope the Reader will indulge me with the use of the Word *Drear*, as I have *Spencer's* Authority for it, and its Adjective is universally adopted.

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Attentive to his Name, she kept him Steeds, 105  
 Prov'd in the Course, and sprung of noted Breeds;  
 Belts, which a greater Round of Waist demand,  
 And Weapons that expect a stronger Hand.  
 Infatiate Hopes!—what Vests did she not frame,  
 Too credulous to his ambiguous Name? 110  
 A purple Robe, gay Ensign of his Reign,  
 And Sceptre, which he might with Ease sustain;  
 All these th' impassion'd Sire to *Vulcan's* Blaze  
 Consigns, and on the Pile his Scepter lays,  
 If haply, by indulging thus his Rage, 115  
 He might at length the Force of Grief assuage:  
 Mean Time the Augur, as the Rites demand,  
 From out the Host selects an able Band,  
 In felling Trees their manly Strength to prove,  
 And heap a Pyre with Ruins of the Grove; 120  
 That *Vulcan* might absolve the guilty Snake,  
 And for th' ill-omen'd War Atonement make:  
 'Tis theirs to force thro' *Tempe's* Gloom a Way,  
 Hurl *Nemea* down, and bare the Woods to Day.  
 They level strait a venerable Wood, 125  
 That long exempted from the Axe had stood;  
 Thro' *Argos* and *Lycaum* none display'd  
 A greater Stretch of hospitable Shade,

v. 195. *Attentive to his Name*] The Oracle of *Apollo*, which always loved to play upon Words, gave out in a Response to *Lycurgus*, that his Infant's Fate was expressed in his Name, which was *Archemorus*, and being derived from *αρχη* and *μορθη*, might either signify, that it was his Fate to reign, or that he would be the first Person that should be slain in the *Theban* War.

Prima, Lycurge, dabis Diræo funera bello.

*αρχη* signifying either a Beginning or Government, and *μορθη* Fate or Death.

Sacred for Length of Time it far extends  
 Its Branches, nor alone in Age transcends 130  
 The oldest Mortal's Grandfire, but has seen  
 The Nymphs and Fauns, transform'd in Shape and Mien;  
 Then swift Destruction caught th' unhappy Grove,  
 Struck by the sounding Axe.—The Birds above  
 Quit their warm Nests, and Savages their Den, 135  
 Rous'd by the Crash of Trees and Shouts of Men.  
 The Cypress, Winter-proof, *Chaonian* Wood,  
 The lofty Beech, the Pitch-Tree, *Vulcan's* Food,

v. 137. *The Cypress, Winter-Proof*] This Description of felling the Forests, is thought by Mr. *Pope* the best in our Author, and copied by *Spencer* and *Tasso*.

The sailing Pine, the Cedar proud and tall,  
 The Vine-prop Elm, the Poplar never dry,  
 The Builder Oak, sole King of Forests all,  
 The Aspin good for Staves, the Cypress Funeral.  
 The Laurel, Meed of mighty Conquerors,  
 And Poets Sage: the Fir that weepeth still,  
 The Willow, worn of forlorn Paramours,  
 The Yewh, obedient to the Bender's Will,  
 The Birch for Shafts, the Sallow for the Mill,  
 The Myrrh, sweet bleeding in the bitter Wound,  
 The warlike Beech, the Ash for nothing ill,  
 The fruitful Olive, and the Plantane round,  
 The Carver holm, the Maple seldom inward sound.

*Fairy Queen, B. 1,*

Caggion recise dai pungenti ferri  
 Le sacre palme, e frassini selvaggi  
 I funebri Cipressi, e i Pini, e i cerri,  
 L' Elci frondose, egli alti Abeti, e i Faggi,  
 Gli olmi mariti, a cui tal' or s'appoggia  
 La Vite, e con piè torto al ciel s'en poggia.  
 Altri i Tassi, e le Querce altri percote,  
 Che mille volte rinovar le chiome,  
 E milie volte ad ogni incontro immote  
 L' ire de' venti han rintuzzate, e dome:  
 Ed altri impose alle stridenti Rote  
 D'orni, e di cedri e' odorate some;

250 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK VI.

The Holm, the Yeugh of deadly Juice, and Oak,  
 By Time uninjur'd, bow beneath their Stroke ; 140  
 The Alder, wont to cleave the billowy Flood,  
 And Ash, that soon will drink of human Blood,  
 The Fir. th' uncultur'd Ash, on Mountains found,  
 The Pine, that breaths forth Fragrance from each Wound,  
 And married Elm, around whose Trunks the Vine 145  
 Her Tendrils folds, to Earth their Heads decline.  
 Earth groans. Such vasty Heaps of Waste o'erspread  
 Mount *Ismarus*, when *Boreas* lifts his Head  
 From his burst Cave :——not with such rapid Force  
 Red Sheets of nightly Flame pursue their Course 150  
 O'er Forests, aided by the fanning Wind.  
*Sylvanus*, *Pales*, and the mongrel Kind  
 Of Satyrs quit with Grief their Seats of Ease,  
 Soft gurgling Rills, cool Grots and shady Trees ;  
 Deep groans the Forest, as they take their Leave : 155  
 Close to the Trees th' embracing Dryads cleave.

Lasciano al suon dell' arme al vario gridò  
 E le fere, e gli Augeli, la tana, e' l nido.

*Jerus. del. C. 3. V. 76.*

The Editor of *Pitt's Virgil* in a Note on the following Verses of *Virgil*,

Itur in antiquam sylvam; stabula alta ferarum :  
 Procumbunt piceæ ; sonat icæ securibus ilex,  
 Fraxineæque trabes, cuneis et fissile robur  
 Scinditur ; advolvunt ingentes montibus ornos.

observes, that the Difference between the Genius of *Virgil* and *Statius* is very visible on this Occasion. The latter of whom minutely and at length describes the different Sorts of Trees that were cut down to make the funeral Pile for *Archemorus*. While *Virgil* observes his usual and pregnant Brevity, knowing he had not Leisure to dwell on this Subject, merely for the Sake of a florid Description. 'Tis observable, that *Tasso* has imitated *Statius* in this very Particular.



Thus, when some Leader to the Soldier's Rage  
 Relinquish a Captive Town, they all engage  
 In Quest of Spoil, and e'er the Trumpets found,  
 The plunder'd City's scarcely to be found. 160  
 They fell, they bear away, they load the Cars;  
 Scarce such a Din attends the Work of *Mars*.  
 And now their equal Toil two Altars rais'd  
 Of equal Height: one to th' Immortals blaz'd,  
 And t'other to the cheerless Ghosts of Hell, 165  
 When the grave Pipe proclaim'd the fun'ral Knell,  
 Mix'd with the crooked Horn.—In ancient Time  
 This Mode prevail'd o'er *Phrygia's* ample Clime.  
*Pelops*, as Fame reports, this Rite proclaim'd  
 For lesser Shades, and mournful Dirges fram'd,  
 Such as were heard, when *Niobe* of old  
 To *Sypilos* twelve Urns, disfigur'd, roll'd.  
 The *Grecian* Princes at the Head appear:  
 The Burial-Gifts and Sacrifice they bear,  
 And name aloud in Titles of Renown 175  
 The pious Honours of their State or Town.  
 The fun'ral Bed, a length of Time between,  
 On youthful Shoulders moves (a solemn Scene)  
 The King selected them with cautious Care:  
 A Shout uncouth succeeds and rends the Air. 180  
 The Peers of *Lerna* safe inclose their King:  
 The softer Sex, as num'rous, form a Ring  
 Around the Mother: next the *Lemnian* Queen,  
 Encircled by no slender Troop, is seen:  
 Not mindless of the past, th' *Inachian* Train  
 Intrench the mournful Fair: her Sons sustain

v. 172. *To Sypilos*] A River, into which *Niobe* was said to be metamorphosed, after she was slain by *Phæbus* and *Diana*.

v. 185. *Not mindless of the past*] *Lycurgus* in a Fit of Revenge, made

Her livid Arms, and pleas'd that she is found,  
 Indulge her Complaints, nor set her Grief a Bound.  
 There, soon as sad *Euridice*, bereft  
 Of all her Joys, th' ill-omen'd Dome had left, 190  
 From her bare Breasts these artless Accents broke,  
 And, with long Shrieks prefacing, thus she spoke.  
 My Son, I hop'd not to have follow'd here,  
 Surrounded with *Argolic* Dames, thy Bier;  
 Nor, frantic as I was, thy Infant-Years 195  
 Once made a Part of these my Hopes and Fears:  
 Nought cruel I fore-ween'd, for at this Age  
 How could the *Theban* War my Thoughts engage?  
 What God, however sanguine to destroy,  
 Would spill our Blood in Combat for his Joy? 200  
 What drew this Curse upon us? whence arose  
 Such Ills?—no slaughter'd Babes disturb our Foes.  
 Of Tears and Slaughter I've the First-Fruits found,  
 Before the Sword is drawn, or Trumpets sound;  
 While, void of Thought, and fond, too fond of Rest, 205  
 I trust my Infant to another's Breast.  
 What could I do? she spread a Tale abroad,  
 Of her old Sire, preserv'd by pious Fraud.  
 Lo! the great Heroine, who sole abjur'd  
 The Mischief, vow'd by Oath, and safe secur'd 210

made several Attempts to kill *Hyppolyte*, as the Authorefs of his Son's Death through her Negligence. See the last Book, Verse 945.

v. 209 *Lo! the great Heroine*] *Dido* casts a like sneering Reflection on *Aeneas*, after she had discovered his Intentions of leaving her.

————— En dextra fidesque  
 Quem secum patrios aiunt portare Penates,  
 Quem subiiss: humerum confectum ætate parentem!

Book 4. Verse 397.

Her

Her Parent from the furious *Lemnian* Train!  
 Still does this daring Dame your Faith retain?  
 Was she so pious, who in desert Grove  
 Could leave the Product of another's Love,  
 Expos'd on all Sides, in a dang'rous Place, 215  
 Where no huge Snake of *Python's* monstrous Race  
 Was needful to destroy: Th' inclement Skies,  
 And empty Terrors might alone suffice.  
 Nor can I blame you.—This disastrous Curse  
 Was fated by the Choice of such a Nurse. 220  
 Yet wast thou kind, my Son, to her alone,  
 The fonder Parent was as yet unknown:  
 No Mother's Joys I reap'd of thee: her Call  
 Was listen'd to, in Preference of all.  
 How sweet thy Complaints, thy Laughter mixt with Tears. 225  
 And Murmurs must have sounded in her Ears,  
 When first thy Tongue essay'd the Speech of Man,  
 With thee a Mother's Office she began,  
 I finish it.—But shall she thus offend,  
 Unpunish'd, and will ye her Crimes befriend, 230  
 O Chiefs?—why bring ye these? the fun'ral Pyre,  
 And Burial Rites no useless Gifts require.  
 Her, O ye Chiefs! (his Manes ask no more)  
 Her to a childless Mother's Rage restore,  
 By this first Rage of War:—so may each Dame 235  
 Of *Thebes* lament a Son of equal Fame.  
 Her Tresses then she tore, and thus renew'd  
 Her Prayr's.—Restore, nor think my Soul indu'd  
 With savage Principles, so I expire,  
 With Vengeance cloy'd, and feed the self-same Fire. 240  
 While thus she spake, at Distance she beheld  
*Hyppolyte*, whose Grief no Reason quell'd,

On Hair and Bosom vented.—This espy'd,  
 Ill brooking Partnership in Woe, she cry'd.  
 This Crime at least, Ye Peers, and thou, O King, 245  
 To whom new Honours from our Ruin spring,  
 This Crime forbid, and bear the Traiteurs hence.  
 Her Presence gives the sacred Shade Offence.  
 Why in these Sorrows does she bear a Part,  
 And with fresh Anguish rend a Parent's Heart? 250  
 What Alien's Child can she with Truth bemoan,  
 While thus in close Embrace she grasps her own?  
 This said, she swoons: her Complaints abruptly cease,  
 And the fair Mourner sunk to sudden Peace.  
 Thus when some cruel Swain, or Beast of Prey 255  
 Has borne a Heifer's half-wean'd Young away,  
 Whose Strength and vital Juices were sustain'd  
 By milky Nutriment, and Udders drain'd,  
 The childless Parent to the Vales complains,  
 And questions Rivers, Herds, and lonely Plains: 260  
 She loaths her Home, retires from Field the last,  
 Nor e'er she parts, indulges the Repast.  
 But on the Pile the Sire his Sceptre lays,  
 And casts the Thund'rer's Honours in the Blaze;  
 He then curtails the Locks, that scatter'd flow 265  
 Adown his Back and Breasts, a Sign of Woe,

v. 265. *He then curtails*] Mr. Pope's Note on the 166th Verse of the 23d Book of *Homer's Iliad* is well worth the Reader's Notice. — 'The Ceremony of cutting off the Hair in Honour of the dead, was practised not only among the *Greeks*, but also among other Nations: thus *Statius, Thebaid* 6. This Custom is taken Notice of in holy Scripture: *Ezekiel* describing a great Lamentation says, they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee, Ch. 27. Ver. 31. I believe it was done not only in Token of Sorrow, but had perhaps a concealed Meaning: that as the Hair was cut from the Head, and was never more to be joined to it, so was the

And, strewing o'er the Infant, as he lies,  
 Weeps pious Tears, and thus, impassion'd, cries.  
 These Ringlets, by a former Contract vow'd,  
 On thee, perfidious *Jave*, I had bestow'd; 270  
 But since the Priest deceiv'd me, and my Pray'r  
 Was lost, these Locks his worthier Shade shall bear.  
 And now, a Torch apply'd beneath, the Fire  
 Cracks on the leafy Summit of the Pyre.  
 Scarce can they drive his furious Friends away: 275  
 The *Grecians* strait the King's Command obey,  
 And, standing with pretended Arms between,  
 Exclude the Parents from the mournful Scene.  
*Vulcan* grows rich: no Ashes e'er before  
 Were deck'd with such a Mass of various Ore. 280

' dead for ever cut from the living, never more to return. I must  
 ' observe, that this Ceremony of cutting off the Hair was not al-  
 ' ways in Token of Sorrow; *Lycophron* in his *Cassandra*, Ver. 976,  
 ' describing a general Lamentation, says

*Κεῖνός ἐστιν αἰὶνός τε καὶ ἄλκιμος πόθος.*

' And that the Antients sometimes had their Hair cut off in Token  
 ' of Joy is evident from *Juvenal*, Sat. 12. Ver. 82.

————— Gaudent ibi vertice raso  
 Garrula securi narrare pericula nautæ.

' This seeming Contradiction will be solved by having Respect to  
 ' the different Practices of different Nations. If it was the general  
 ' Custom of any Country to wear long Hair, then the cutting it off  
 ' was a Token of Sorrow; but if it was the Custom to wear short  
 ' Hair, then the letting it grow long and neglecting it, shewed,  
 ' that such People were Mourners.'

v. 279. *Vulcan grows rich: no Ashes e'er before*] This Part of the  
 Ceremonies is copied by *Chaucer* in his *Palamon* and *Arcite*, which  
 I shall give the Reader in Mr. *Dryden*'s Words.

Rich Jewels in the Flames the wealthy cast,  
 While the devouring Fire was burning fast;  
 And some their Shields, and some their Lances threw,  
 And gave the Warrior's Ghost a Warrior's Due.

The Silver melts ; the Gems and rich Attire  
 With Gold embroider'd, crackle in the Fire.  
 The Planks of hardest Oak are scented o'er  
 With *Syrian* Juices : and the honey'd Store  
 Of many a Hive, and costly Saffron crown'd 285  
 The Heap. Full Bowls of Milk are hung around.  
 From Vessels Boat-wise form'd, they pour a Flood  
 Of Milk yet smoaking, mix'd with fable Blood.  
 The *Grecian* Princes then in Order led  
 Sev'n equal Troops, to purify the dead ; 290  
 Around the Pile an hundred Horsemen ride  
 With Arms revers'd, and compass ev'ry Side :  
 They fac'd the left (for so the Rites require)  
 Bent with the Dust, the Flames no more aspire.  
 Thrice, thus dispos'd, they wheel'd in Circles round 295  
 The hallow'd Corse : their clashing Weapons sound.

Full Bowls of Wine, of Honey, Milk and Blood,  
 Were pour'd upon the Pile of burning Wood,  
 And kissing Flames receive, and hungry lick the Food. }  
 Then thrice the mounted Squadrons ride around,  
 The Fire, and *Arcite's* Name they thrice resound :  
 Hail and farewell, they shouted thrice amain ;  
 Thrice facing to the left, and thrice they turn'd again.  
 Still as they turn'd, they beat their clatt'ring Shields.  
 The Women mix their Cries, and Clamour fills the Fields.

*Virgil* mentions the same Circumstances in the funeral Rites of *Patris*. *Æn.* II.

Ter circum accensos, cincti fulgentibus armis,  
 Decurrere rogos ; ter mæstum funeris ignem  
 Lustravere in equis, ululatusque ore dedere.  
 Spargitur & tellus lachrymis, sparguntur et arma.]  
 It cælo clamorque virum, clangorque tubarum.  
 Hinc alii spolia occisis direpta Latinis  
 Conjiciunt igni galeasque, ensesque decoros,  
 Frænaque, ferventesque rotas ; pars munera nota ;  
 Ipsorum clypeos, et non felicia tela. *Vir.* 188.

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Four Times their Arms a Crash tremendous yield,  
 And female Shrieks re-eccho thro' the Field,  
 Another Pile, high-heap'd with burning Wood,  
 For slaughter'd Herds and reeking Victims stood. 300  
 The Prophet warning them to cease their Woes,  
 And Sign of a new Fun'ral, though he knows  
 Each Omen true, all wheeling to the Right,  
 Return : their brandish'd Arms reflect the Light.  
 Each Warrior there some grateful Off'ring toft, 305  
 As Fancy dictates : one a Bit emboss'd,  
 Another in the Blaze a Helmet threw,  
 A Belt or Spear, that lighten'd, as it flew.  
 Each adverse Field in Concert hoarse replies :  
 The Groves are fray'd with their repeated Cries ; 310  
 While the loud Clarion and shrill-sounding Horn  
 Pierce the quick Ear with Clangors scarcely borne.  
 Such two vast Armies at the Trumpet's Sound,  
 E'er to its highest Pitch their Wrath is wound  
 By Loss of Blood, or Slaughter dies the Spear, 315  
 All beautiful with equal Arms appear :  
 Involv'd in Clouds, the Pow'r of Battle stands,  
 And doubts, on whom to turn his conq'ring Hands.  
 The Rites were clos'd, and *Vulcan's* Fury gone,  
 A Heap of Ashes now remain'd alone, 320  
 When, drawing near the Fire, a copious Show'r  
 Of Water on the smould'ring Pile they pour.  
 With early Dawn their pious Toils begun,  
 And scarcely ended with the setting Sun.  
 Nine Times had *Phosphor* from the Realms of Light 325  
 Chac'd the Dew-silv'ring Stars and vanquish'd Night,

And nine Times, Harbinger of *Cynthia's* Reign,  
 Had chang'd his Courser.—By the conscious Train,  
 Of Stars, that glitter round the radiant Moon,  
 He's known to be the same at Morn and Noon: 330  
 When, sacred to the Babe, a Tomb arose,  
 Which Art and Speed at once united shows:  
 Stone was the Structure. In a Range display'd,  
 The Scenes of his sad Hist'ry were pourtray'd.  
 The Princess here the thirsty *Grecians* guides, 335  
 To where *Langia* rolls his secret Tides.  
 There creeps the luckless Infant, there he lies:  
 The Serpent writhes his Spires of hideous Size  
 Around the Verge. You might expect to hear  
 Him hiss, so well he clasps the marble Spear. 34  
 Now Fame invites the Vulgar to the Sight  
 Of sportive Contests, and a bloodless Fight:  
 Rous'd at the Call, they quit the Fields and Town;  
 E'en those, to whom War's Horrors are unknown,  
 Whom Life's exhausted Prime confin'd at Home, 345  
 Shake off old Age, and leave their peaceful Dome.  
 Ne'er were such Crowds on th' *Ephyrean* Shore,  
 Or Circus of *Oenomaus* before.  
 With crooked Hills, and Trees begirt above,  
 A Vale subsides, the Center of a Grove. 350  
 Rough, thorny Ridges lie around, which yield  
 A Length of Shade, and bound it from the Field;  
 Then Hillocks, rising through a vast Extent  
 Of grassy Turf, increase the steep Ascent.

v. 328. The Antients thought *Phosphor* and *Vesper* were not the same individual Stars, as they have a different Appearance at their rising; which the Poet attributes to their changing Horfes. He says, therefore, that the Stars are not deceived like Mortals, who supposed, that they were two distinct Stars.



There, soon as *Phæbus* mark'd the sylvan Scene 355  
 With ruddy Streaks, the martial Troops convene :  
 'Twas Pleasure there to measure with their Eyes  
 The Number, Looks, and Habits of th' Allies  
 Amid the mingled Crowd.——In Wonder lost,  
 They view the Strength and Ardor of their Host. 360  
 A hundred Bulls of dusky Hue they brought,  
 The Flow'r of all the Herd, and never wrought ;  
 Then Cows in Number and in Hue the same,  
 And Heifers, not yet horn'd, loud-bellowing, came.  
 In Order then the Statues of their Sires 365  
 Are borne along : the gazing Crowd admires  
 Their Life-resembling Form and sculptur'd Deeds.  
 Great *Hercules* the mute Procession leads :  
 To the fell *Nemean* Savage short of Breath,  
 He fronts his Breast, and lifts the Arm of Death. 370  
 The *Greeks* with some Degree of Horror ey'd  
 The brazen Hero, tho' their Badge and Pride.  
 Next, on the left, in Order they discern  
 Old *Inachus*, who pours abroad his Urn,  
 And, stretch'd beneath a lofty Bank of Reeds, 375  
 Surveys his Stream slow-gliding thro' the Meads.  
 Ready for Dalliance, *Io* stands behind ;  
 Heart-piercing Anguish touch'd the Parent's Mind,

v. 365. *In Order then*] Though nothing could be better contrived to excite Virtue in the Breasts of the *Grecian* Princes and Leaders, than this Exhibition of the Statues and Images of their Ancestors, yet I fear, it will be thought too long, and had it not been in a Book entirely devoted to Description, it would have been absolutely unpardonable.

v. 377. *Ready for Dalliance, Io stands behind*] The Daughter of *Inachus*, whom *Jupiter* loved, and lest his Wife *Juno* should know it, he turned *Io* into an Heifer : jealous *Juno* suspected it, and begged the Heifer of her Husband, and set *Argos* (one that had an hun-

As he view'd *Argus*, starr'd with watchful Eyes :  
 But the more grateful Ruler of the Skies 380  
 Prepar'd a Temple on the *Pbarian* Shore,  
 And bad *Aurora* the new Pow'r adore.  
 Then *Tantalus* (not he who's feign'd to lean  
 O'er Streams untouch'd, or starve amidst the Scene  
 Of Plenty) but the Thund'rer's pious Guest 385  
 Appears above the Lot of Mortals blest.  
 At Distance conq'ring *Pelops* guides the Reins  
 Of Ocean's God, and thunders o'er the Plains :  
 False *Myrtil* leaves unpinn'd the Chariot-Wheels,  
 And Life and Vict'ry from his Master steals. 320  
 Amidst the rest was sage *Acrisus* seen,  
*Choræbus*, Warriour of terrific Mien,  
 Fair *Danaë*, who blames her guilty Breast,  
 And *Amymone*, in the Stream distrest :  
*Alcmena* too the young *Alcides* bears ; 395  
 A triple Moon confines her braided Hairs.

dred Eyes) to keep her: *Jupiter* could not refrain. but sent *Mer-*  
*cury* to kill *Argos*: *Juno*, in Revenge, sent a Gad-fly that stung her  
 and made her mad, so that she run to *Egypt*, where her old Form  
 came to her again, and she was married to *Osiris*; after her Death,  
 the *Egyptians* deified and worshipped her by the Name of *Isis*, usually  
 sacrificing unto her a Goose: when they worshipped they used to  
 call *Io, Io*, whence arose that Proverb. The Occasion of the Poet's  
 Fiction concerning *Io*, whom they feigned to be turned into a Cow,  
 was this; *Io* being with Child by a *Phenician* Mariner, and fearing  
 her Father's Displeasure, went with the *Phenicians* into *Egypt* in a  
 Ship which had a pained Bull.

v. 386. *Appears, above the Lot*] *Horace* mentions this Mark of  
 Favour conferred by *Jove* on *Tantalus*.

*Occidit & Pelopis genitor conviva Deorum.*

v. 396. *A triple Moon confines her braided Hairs*] This triple Moon  
 was symbolical of *Jupiter's* excessive Lust, who, when he lay with  
*Alcmena*, commanded the Moon to make her nightly Course thrice  
 as long as usual.

The wrangling Sons of *Belus* join their Hands  
 In impious Leagues. More mild in Aspect stands  
*Egyptus*, and with secret Transport hung  
 On the false Flatt'ry of his Brother's Tongue, 400  
 Unconscious of his inward Hate and Spite,  
 And all the future Horrors of the Night.  
 A thousand more were there, yet these suffice,  
 When Virtue calls each Rival to the Prize.  
 First toil'd the Coursers.—Mighty God of Verse, 405  
 Theirs and their princely Masters' Names rehearse:  
 For ne'er was a more gen'rous Race of Steeds  
 Collected for the Course on *Grecian* Meads.  
 As if a num'rous Flock of Birds should try  
 Their active Pow'rs, and wing the mid-way Sky, 410  
 Or *Æolus* to the mad Winds propose  
 The Palm of Swiftnefs, such a Tumult rose.  
 Before them all was fleet *Arion* led,  
 Distinguish'd by his Mane of fiery Red:  
 From Ocean's God (if antient Fame says true) 415  
 The gen'rous Horse his honour'd Lineage drew;  
 'Tis said, he rein'd him first with forming Hand,  
 And curbing Bit upon the dusty Strand,  
 But spar'd the Lash: for free he scours the Plain,  
 Swift as the Surge that skims along the Main, 420  
 Oft in the Car with other Steeds, design'd  
 To swim the *Lybian* Billows, was he join'd,

v. 405. *First toil'd the Coursers*] We shall not be surprized to see *Statius* make this Digression, to give us the History of his Horses, when we consider to what Excess the Passion for fine Racers is carried in our own Times, and with what Exactness and Precision the News-Papers give us their Genealogy.

And train'd to carry his cærulean Sire  
 To any Coast.—The tardier Clouds admire  
 His active Strength, and each contending Wind, 425  
*Notus* or *Eurus*, follows far behind.

*Amphytrion's* val'rous Son with equal Speed  
 He bore, deep Ruts inscrib'd upon the Mead,  
 When for *Eurystheus* Wars unjust he wag'd,  
 Yet fierce, unmanageably fierce he rag'd: 430

Then by the Gift of Heav'n, *Adrastus* rein'd  
 The Courser, and to his own Service train'd;  
 Now, many Cautions giv'n, the Sire decreed  
 To *Polynices'* Hands the mettled Steed;  
 He teaches him, what Arts will best assuage 435  
 His Wrath, when chaf'd, and fir'd with em'lous Rage.

' Give not the Reins up freely, nor provoke  
 ' His headstrong Fury with too frequent Stroke:  
 ' With Threats and Spurs urge others to the Course;  
 ' He'll go at Will, and mock thy curbing Force.' 440

Thus *Phæbus*, when he lent the fir'y Rein,  
 And plac'd his Offspring on the rapid Wain,  
 With boding Tears injoin'd.—Be wise, my Son,  
 Th' untrampled Zones and Stars insidious shun.  
 With pious Caution first the Youth proceeds, 445  
 But Fate at length sets free th' immortal Steeds.  
 Fir'd with the Prospect of the second Prize,  
 Rapt by *Oebalian* Steeds, the Prophet flies:

v. 435. *He teaches him*] *Nestor* gives a similar Caution to *Antiloebus* in the 23 Book of the *Iliad*, on which Passage I shall refer the Reader to Mr *Pope's* Observations, as they are equally applicable to this before us.

Thy Offspring, *Cyllarus*, by Theft obtain'd,  
When *Caster* on the *Scythian* Coast remain'd, 450

And chang'd *Amyclas*'s Bridle for the Oar.  
A Robe of snowy Hue the Augur wore :  
White were his Steeds, with Trappings richly drest,  
The same his Helm, his Mitre and his Crest.  
*Admetus* too, the blissful, from the Meads 455

Of *Thessaly*, scarce curbs his barren Steeds :  
From Seed of Centaurs Fame reports them sprung,  
Nor can I disbelieve it, since so young,  
They scorn th' Embraces of the Male : hence Force  
Invests their Limbs, and Vigour in the Course : 460

Their Sex they thus dissemble Day and Night,  
Black Spots are seen betwixt the Streaks of White.  
Such was the Colour of each gen'rous Steed,  
Nor were they far inferior to the Breed,  
Which, list'ning to *Apollo*'s tuneful Lays 465  
Forgot their Pasture, lost in wild Amaze.

v. 449. *Thy Offspring, Cyllarus*] Frauds in the Case of Horses have been thought excusable in all Times. *Homer* mentions an Instance of one in the fifth Book of the *Iliad*.

Τῆς γὰρ τοι γαίης, ἥς Τρῶϊ περ εὐρύοπα Ζῶς  
Δῶχ', ἣθ' ὡσαύτῃ Γαιουμήδης ὑπὲρ ἄλλοις  
ἵππων, ὅσσ' ἴασι, ἵππ' ἐν τ' ἑλάνῃ.  
Τῆς γαίης ἔκλεψι ἀνὰξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγχίσης,  
Λεῖπρη Λαομίδεος ὑποχὼν θήλει' ἵππους·  
τῶν οἱ ἐξ ἐρίοντο ἐνὶ μισαίροις γαίθ' αὖτις. Verse 265.

And *Virgil* was so well pleas'd with it, as to introduce it in the twentieth *Æneid*,

Absenti *Æneæ* currum geminosque jugales.  
Semine ab æthereo, spirantes naribus ignem,  
Illorum de gente, patri quos dædala Circe  
Suppositâ de matre nothos furata creavit.

Lo! *Jason's* youthful Sons too, whence new Fame,  
 And added Honours crown the Mother's Name,  
 Ascend the Car, which either *Thoas* bore,  
 The Grandfire's proper Name in Days of Yore, 470  
 And call'd from *Euneus'* Omen. — They display;  
 Like Features, Chariots, Horses and Array;  
 The same their Vows: each wish'd the Palm his own,  
 Or by his Brother to be won alone.  
 Next great *Hippodamus* and *Chromis* ride: 475  
 One was by Birth to *Hercules* ally'd,  
 One to *Oenomaus*.—'Twas hard to read,  
 Which drove the most untam'd and headstrong Steed:  
 One guides the Stud of *Getic Diomed*,  
 One those by his *Pisæan* Father bred. 480  
 Dire Trophies and the purple Stain of War  
 With horrid Filth begrime each Hero's Car.  
 In Lieu of Goals, an Oak on one Side stood,  
 Long-shorn of Leaves, a naked Trunk of Wood,  
 On t'other lay (a Barrier of the Ground) 485  
 A rocky Fragment, plac'd 'twixt either Bound;  
 Far as a Dart at four Times we may send,  
 But at three Shots a Shaft might reach the End.  
 Mean while *Apollo* charm'd the tuneful Throng  
 Of Sister-Muses with celestial Song: 490  
 The trembling Strings responding to his Hands  
 With silver Sound, on highest Heav'n he stands,  
 And views *Parnassian* Lands, his own Domain.  
 The Gods were first the Subject of his Strain:  
 To *Jove* and *Pblegra* oft his Lyre he strung, 495  
 The *Python*, and his Brother's Honours sung,  
 And then explain'd, what Pow'r the Thunder drives,  
 Fed by what Springs the boundless Ocean lives;  
 Whence

Whence Winds arise, Stars glide along the Sky,  
 And River-Gods their empty Urns supply : 500  
 What Order guides the Sun's impetuous Flight,  
 Contracts the Day, and lengthens out the Night ;  
 Whether Earth lies the lowest, or between,  
 And close encompass'd by a World unseen.  
 This ended, he delays to hear the Nine 505  
 Attune their Lay, and whilst he tries to twine  
 A Wreath of well-earn'd Laurel for his Lyre,  
 And to the Wind resigns his loose Attire,  
 Not distant far, brought backward by their Cries,  
*Nemea*, belov'd of *Hercules*, he spies, 510  
 And there a goodly Sight of gen'rous Steeds,  
 Yok'd for the Race, and traversing the Meads.  
 He knew each princely Rider :——near at Hand  
*Admetus*, and the Prophet took their Stand.  
 Then to himself he said.——What Pow'r above, 515  
 Enrag'd against these Objects of our Love,  
 Hath urg'd them to dispute the Prize of Fame ?  
 Their pious Deeds alike my Favour claim.  
 I cannot well determine, which exceeds.  
 One, when I serv'd him in *Thessalian* Meads, 520  
 (By *Jove* and Fate's imperious Will constrain'd)  
 Burnt Incense to his Servant, nor disdain'd

v. 503. *By a World unseen*] The Poet alludes here to the *Antipodes*, a Set of Beings, who were supposed to live Feet to Feet, or diametrically opposite to us.——It is somewhat remarkable, that Pope *Gregory* excommunicated all such as believed their Existence.

v. 520. *One, when I serv'd*] *Apollo* being exiled from Heaven by *Jupiter*, for killing the *Cyclops*, served *Admetus* in the Capacity of Cow-herd nine Years, and having been treated kindly, promised him, that when the Time of his Death was come, another should die for him ; but he found none that would take his Turn, but his Wife *Alceste*, whom for her Piety *Proserpine* restored to Life again.

The latent God ; and one attends in Part  
 My Rites, a Student of th' ætherial Art.  
 What tho' *Admetus* in Desert transcend, 525  
 Yet honour we the Seer's approaching End ;  
 Late is his Death, the fatal Sisters give  
 A Length of Years : to thee no Joys survive ;  
 Thou know'st, the gloomy Gulph of *Thebes* is near,  
 For oft our Birds have sung it in thine Ear. 530  
 He said, and scarce restrain'd the rising Tears :  
 Then strait to *Nemea* his Course he steers,  
 And gleams at ev'ry Bound o'er all the Skies ;  
 More swift than his great Father's Bolt he flies,  
 Or his own Shafts.—Long had he trod the Plain, 235  
 Yet still the Traces of his Flight remain  
 Impres'd in Heav'n, and thro' th' Expanse serene,  
 And Zephyrs was a Track of Glory seen.  
 Now *Prothous*, by the rest commission'd, took  
 The brazen Head-piece, and impartial shook 540

v. 539. Now Prothous] Mr. *Pope* in his Version of the *Iliad* has transcribed a Note of *Eustathius* on the 427th Line of the 23d Book, which merits the Attention of *Statius's* Readers likewise ' According to these Lots the Charioteers took their Places ; but to know ' whether they stood all in an equal Front, or one behind another, ' is a Difficulty: *Eustathius* says, the Antients were of Opinion, ' that they did not stand in one Front ; because it is evident, that ' he who had the first Lot had a great Advantage of the other Charioteers ? If he had not, why should *Achilles* cast lots ? Madam ' *Dacier* is of Opinion, that they all stood abreast to the Barrier, and ' that the first would have a sufficient Advantage, as he was nearer ' the Bound, and stood within the rest ; whereas the others must take ' a larger Circle, and consequently were forced to run a greater ' Compass of Ground. *Phœnix* was placed as an Inspector of the ' Race, i. e. says *Eustathius*, he was to make Report, wæether they ' had observed the Laws of the Race in their several Turnings. *Se- phocles* observes the same Method with *Homer* in Relation to the Inspectors in his *Electra*.



BOOK VI. STATIUS's THEBAID. 267

The Lots together : these to all dispose  
 Their Port and Order, as th' Inscription shows.  
 Now Men and Steeds, than which no Time or Place  
 Can greater boast the God's acknowledg'd Race,  
 Stand to one Spot confin'd. Audacious Fear 540  
 And paly Hope in ev'ry Face appear :  
 Doubtful, they tremble, yet contend to start,  
 And sev'rish Dread invades their ev'ry Part.  
 The Steeds' and Horses' Ardour is the same :  
 Their quiv'ring Eye-balls dart a ceaseless Flame ; 545  
 They champ the sounding Bit, their Mouths run o'er  
 With frothy Foam.——Bars, Gates, and Rails no more  
 Oppose their Progress, while their stifled Ire,  
 And Spirit curb'd in Clouds of Smoke transpire.  
 Thus Rest inglorious galls each gen'rous Heart : 555  
 A thousand Steps are lost before they start,

———Οι τεπληροὶ βραχίονες  
 Κλῆροι ἐπ' ἡλάν, καὶ κρτιστῆσαν διφρεσιν.

'The Antients say, that the Charioteers started at the *Sigæum*, where  
 'the Ships of *Achilles* lay, and ran towards the *Phæacium*, from the  
 'Ships towards the Shores. But *Aristarchus* affirmed, that they ran  
 'in the Compass of Ground five *Stadia* (*i. e.* about five Furlongs)  
 'which lay between the Wall and the Tents towards the Shore.  
 v. 545. *Audacious Fear*] So *Virgil*, speaking of the Chariot-Race,  
*Æne.*

———*Spes arrectæ Juvenum, exultantiaque haurit*  
*Corda pavor pulsans.*

v. 556. *A thousand Steps*] Mr. *Hurd* in his Discourse on poetical  
 Imitation, might have added this Instance of *Pope's* close copying  
*Statius* to the Examples he has given us, as I think it is rather more  
 striking than any of them. In his *Windfor Forest*, speaking of the  
 Courser, he says,

And ere he starts, a thousand Steps are lost.

Now it is clear that

———*Pereunt vestigia mille*  
*Ante fugam.* ———

And they fore run vast Tracts of distant Ground,  
 In Prospect urg'd.—The faithful Grooms surround,  
 Confirm their Courage, smooth each tortur'd Mane,  
 And point the Goal out, they must first attain. 560  
 Soon as the Trumpet had the Signal giv'n,  
 They spring forth all, with em'lous Fury driv'n.  
 What Weapons skim so thick th' embattel'd Plain,  
 What Clouds the Heav'ns, what Sails the billowy Main?  
 Less swift are Rivers, swoln with wintry Show'rs, 565  
 Less swiftly *Vulcan's* wasting Flame devours :  
 Compar'd with these, the Stars, the Storms are slow,  
 And Torrents from the Mountains tardier flow,  
 The *Greeks* beheld them start, and mark'd their Flight,  
 Now ravish'd on a sudden from their Sight : 570  
 Mixt in the Dust of the discolour'd Field,  
 In one vast gloomy Cloud they lie conceal'd,  
 And, a thick Mist fast-gath'ring o'er their Eyes,  
 They scarcely know themselves by Name or Cries.  
 The first Goal past, they kept between them clear 575  
 The utmost Space allow'd in their Career ;  
 The second Track blots out the former. — Now  
 Their Bosoms touch the Yoke, so prone they bow,  
 Then they seem double, as they pull the Rein  
 With striving Knees : the Zephyrs smooth again 580  
 Their Manes erect ; their Necks with Muscles swell,  
 And Earth imbibes the snowy Show'r that fell.  
 From Feet and Wheels arise unequal Sounds :  
 Their Hands ne'er rest : the Driver's Lash rebounds

are the very Words of *Statius* : and indeed they were so very literally translated by the celebrated Author abovementioned, that I could not help rendering them in his own Words.

In echoing Air.—Not thicker in the North 585  
 Pale *Boreas* spreads a spatt'ring Tempest forth  
 Of noxious Hail, nor from the Nurse of *Jove*  
 So many Show'rs oppress the nodding Grove.  
 In Prescience vers'd, *Arion* found with Grief  
 The Rule and Guidance of an unknown Chief, 590  
 And, innocent of Ill, perceiv'd with Dread  
 Th' incestuous Offspring of *Jocasta's* Bed :  
 E'en from the Goal the Burden he disdains,  
 And frets and flies, impetuous, o'er the Plains.  
 The Sons of *Argos* think his Spirits rise 595  
 From Praises, but the Charioteer he flies ;  
 The Charioteer he threats with furious Speed,  
 And seeks his Lord o'er all the spacious Mead.  
 Before all others, and the next by far,  
*Amphiaraus* guides his glitt'ring Car : 600  
*Theffalia's* pious Monarch was descry'd  
 With equal Steps loud thund'ring at his Side.  
*Thoas* and *Euneus*, Brother-Twins succeed,  
 And get and lose alternately the Lead ;  
 Nor ever does immod'rate Lust of Fame 605  
 Impell them to forget Relation's Claim.  
 The last and greatest Tryals of the Day  
 Betwixt *Hippodamus*, and *Chromis* lay ;

v. 587. *Nor from the Nurse of Jove*] The Expression in the Original is

*Nec Oleniis manant tot cornibus imbres.* †

The fabulous History of which is as follows.—*Jupiter*, having been fed in *Crete* with the Milk of a Goat belonging to *Amalthea*, Daughter of *Melissus*, King of that Island, after the Creature was dead, inserted it among the Stars, in Gratitude for the Nourishment received from it. This Sign was supposed by the Antients to cause Rain.

Their heavy Courfers to the Labour yield,  
 Nor ignorant of Art, they took the Field : 610  
*Hippodamus*, whose Chariot scarce precedes,  
 Feels on his Back his Rival's breathing Steeds.  
 The Seer by *Phæbus* lov'd, with nice Survey  
 Mark'd out a narrower Compass of the Way,  
 And, drawing in the Reins with all his Force, 615  
 Hop'd to prevent *Admetus* in the Course.  
 This the *Thessalian* views with careful Eyes,  
 And glows with nearer Prospect of the Prize,  
 While fierce *Arion* in his Lord's Despight,  
 Runs circling round, and wanders to the Right. 620  
*Oenides* now was foremost in the Race,  
*Admetus* follows with redoubled Pace,  
 When, brought at length into the Path again,  
 The Sea-born Courser chaces o'er the Plain,  
 And soon o'ertakes the joyful Rivals Cars : 625  
 A Crash ensues, and strikes the golden Stars ;  
 The Heav'ns too tremble, and, the Crowd struck down,  
 In open View the Seats and Benches shone.  
 But *Polynices* nor commands the Reins,  
 Nor plies the Whip, for pallid Fear restrains :  
 Thus when frail Reason's conquer'd by Despair,  
 The Pilot leaves his Ship to Fortune's Care,

v. 611. Hippodamus] *Homer* gives us the same Image, *Iliad*, Book 23d, Verse 376.

Αἱ φηρηπᾶδες ποδάκις ἔκφρον ἵπποι.  
 τὰς δὲ μιτιζέφρον Διομήδεω ἄριστος ἵππος  
 τρώϊος. ὃν π πολεὸν ἀνδρ' ἴστω, ἀλλὰ μάλ' ἐχθρὸς.  
 Αἰεὶ γὰρ δίφρῳ ἐπισησμένισιν ἱκνῶτο,  
 Πηνελ' Εὐμήλοιο μιτάφρῃσι, οὐρίῃ τ' ἄμω,  
 Θίρμετ. —————

The Stars that once deceiv'd, regards no more,  
 And gives his Art and useless Labour o'er.  
 Again in Rounds, precipitate, they wheel'd, 635  
 Then fetch'd a shorter Compass o'er the Field:  
 Again on Axles Axles clash, again  
 The Wheels on Spokes. No Faith and Peace remain:  
 Wars, horrid Wars, by far more mild appear;  
 Such Emulation reigns thro' the Career, 640  
 They menace mutual Death, unless they yield,  
 And oft run counter, as they cross the Field.  
 When Stripes no more avail, to mend their Speed,  
*Admetus* calls by Name each weary Steed,  
 Swift *Iris*, *Pholoë* approv'd in War, 645  
 And *Thoe*, wont to grace the Victor's Car.  
 The Prophet too recalls to Sense of Shame  
*Cygnus*, whose snowy Colour suits his Name,  
 And *Ascbetas*.——Rous'd at their Master's Threat,  
 The Champain *Strymon* and *Ætbion* beat 650  
 With quicker Steps.——*Hippodamus* provokes  
 The *Calydonian* with repeated Strokes,  
 And *Thoas* courts *Podarces*.——Gentle Chief!  
 The *Theban* Prince alone in silent Grief  
 Obsequious follows, where *Arion* flies, 655  
 And fears to publish his Mischance by Cries.  
 Now thrice th' allotted Compass had they run,  
 And the fourth Heat with Toil was scarce begun,

v. 644. *Admetus calls by Name*] I think our Author commendable for not reciting Speeches of his Heroes to their Horses, as *Homer* has done, who makes *Antilochus* speak a great Deal in the very Heat and Hurry of the Race. As *Eusebnius* observes, he commands and soothes, counsels and threatens his Horses, as if they were rational Creatures.

When the chaf'd Steeds, their clammy Throats on Fire,  
 Breath short and thick, and copiously perspire, 660  
 Till down their Limbs the luke-warm Current glides,  
 While lengthen'd Gasps distend their bellying Sides.  
 Here Fortune, doubtful long what Chief to grace  
 With Palm of Conquest, hastes to close the Race.  
 On great *Aemonius Thoas*' Car runs foul, 665  
 While, fir'd with Hope, he gathers all his Soul  
 To pass *Admetus* : nor his Brother brought  
 The wish'd-for Aid, tho' earnestly he fought ;  
 For fierce *Hippodamus*, of warlike Mien,  
 Prevented his Effort, and drove between : 670  
 Then *Chromis*, back'd with all his Father's Force,  
 And Strength *Herculean* check'd the rapid Course  
 Of fierce *Hippodamus*, just as he gain'd  
 The inner Barrier, and his Car detain'd,  
 Axle in Axle lock'd. The Steeds of *Mars* 675  
 Contend in vain to disengage the Cars,  
 And stretch their musc'lous Necks : as on the Main  
 When sudden Floods *Sicilian* Ships restrain.  
 And *Auster* drives them with his furious Gales,  
 In the mid Ocean stand their swelling Sails. 680  
 He then precipitates him from the Car  
 All shiver'd, and had been the first by far ;  
 But, as the *Thracian* Tyrant's Horses found  
 Their hapless Lord, extended on the Ground,  
 Their raging Lust of wonted Food returns, 685  
 And Thirst for human Blood redoubled burns ;

v. 671. *Then Chromis, back'd with all his*] I fear, Statius will be censured for describing his Warriors so excessively brutish and inhuman in their Contests : but let it be remembered, that *Antilochus* in the 23d Book of the *Iliad*, Verse 423, is equally guilty of ill Treatment with Respect to *Menelaus*.

Nor had he escap'd, but the *Tyrinthian* Chief,  
 Careless of Conquest, came to his Relief,  
 And, turning back the Reins and furious Steeds,  
 Honour'd, tho' vanquish'd, scours along the Meads. 690  
 But *Phæbus*, mindful of his Promise, tries  
 On his lov'd Augur to confer the Prize :  
 At length he marks the favourable Time,  
 And headlong shoots adown th' etherial Clime ;  
 Just as, the Contest nearly at an End, 695  
 Fair Vict'ry nods, and doubts whom to befriend.  
 A snaky-headed Monster then he made  
 Of Air impassive, and an empty Shade ;  
 Whether he form'd it in some lucky Hour,  
 Or rais'd from Hell, the visionary Pow'r 700  
 So dire a Shape, such hideous Features rears,  
 That scarce the Furies (senseless deem'd of Fears)  
 And the grim Porter of th' infernal Cell,  
 Undaunted; might behold a Fiend so fell.  
 It would have fray'd the Steeds, that whirl the Car 705  
 Of *Sol*, or bear the God of Arms to War ;  
 For soon as her foul Face *Arion* spies,  
 His stiff'ning Mane of Gold was seen to rise;

v. 697. *A Snaky-headed Monster*] This Fiction is imitated from *Virgil's Æneid*, Book 12, Verse 845.

Dicuntur geminæ pestes, cognomine diræ ;  
 Quas et tartaream nox intempesta Megæram  
 Uno, eodemque tulit partu, paribusque revinxit  
 Serpentum spiris ventosæque addidit alas.  
 Hæ Jovis ad solium, sævique in limine regis  
 Apparent, acuuntque metum mortalibus ægris,  
 Si quando lethum, horrificum morbosque Deum rex  
 Molitur, meritas aut bello territat urbem  
 Harum unam celerem demisit ab æthere summo  
 Jupiter, inque omen Juturnæ occurrere jussit.

Upright in Air his foremost Feet he rears,  
And with him his Yoke-Fellows, forceful, bears, 710

Th' *Aonian* Exile presses then the Plains,  
And, rolling on his Back, resigns the Reins :

Confin'd no longer by the Driver's Sway,  
The Coursers force the Chariot far away.

Him, lying on the Ground, the *Lemnian* Chief, 715  
*Admetus*, and the Prophet ey'd with Grief,

[And, passing sidelong, took as large a Space,  
As was requir'd to shun him in the Race.

At length, his trusty Comrades standing round,  
He lifts his weary Body from the Ground, 720

And Head immers'd in Gloom ; then seeks again  
The King, and unexpected, soothes his Pain.

How much more blest, O *Theban*, had'st thou dy'd,  
Had not th' inexorable Fiend deny'd ?

What Wars had been prevented ? th' *Argive* Coast, 725  
*Thebes*, and thy Brother then had mourn'd thee lost

In public : then had *Nemea* thee bemoan'd,

And *Lerna's* Banks in hoarser Concert groan'd :

*Larissa* had thy Tomb with Foliage strew'd,

And young *Archemorus* with Envy view'd. 730

*Oeclides* then, altho' the highest Meed

Of Right was due to his unrivall'd Speed,

(Since lighted of his Lord, *Arion* flies)

T' o'ertake the empty Car, impetuous hies.

The God recruits his Strength, and cheers his Soul 735

With Hope:——As if just starting from the Goal,

He throws up all the Reins, and drives along

His Steeds with Threats, and now applies the Thong ;

While the loud-panting Coursers, far more fleet

Than rapid *Enxus*, ply their sounding Feet. 740



Now haste at least (hē cries) while none precedes,  
 The kindling Axle smoaks along the Meads,  
 And scatters Heaps of Sand thrown up afar :  
 Earth groans, and threats e'n then the gaudy Car.  
 Perhaps too *Cygnus* then had known the Course, 745  
 But *Neptune* favours his beloved Horse :  
 Hence Glory justly grac'd the Victor-Steed,  
 Tho' the fam'd Augur gain'd the promis'd Meed,  
 For him two Youths a massy Goblet bore,  
 'Which great *Alcides* rear'd in Days of Yore 750  
 With his one Hand, when brim'd with sparkling Wine,  
 And paid Libations to the Pow'rs divine.  
 Their Eyes the figur'd Centaurs sternly roll'd,  
 And stamp'd an Air of Terror on the Gold.  
 In Height of Anger at the hostile Train 755  
 Brands, Stones, and other Bowls they hurl again  
 On all Sides Faces, pale with hast'ning Death,  
 Show Wrath, that lingers with the latest Breath :  
*Hyleus*, and the Chief himself engage'  
 With far unequal Strength, tho' equal Rage. 760  
 To thee, *Admetus*, as the second Meed  
 A Robe, *Maonian* Produce, was decreed :  
 Thrice had it drank the noblest *Tyrian* Die,  
 Fring'd on the Borders.—Here one might descry

v. 747. For him two Youths.] The Chariot Race is now ended ; and I cannot but acknowledge, that it contains great Variety of natural Incidents, and still greater Pomp of Expression and Harmony of Numbers. However, the Accidents and Circumstances bear a striking Resemblance to those of *Homer* ; e. g. the Encounter of *Chromis* and *Hippodamus* is similar to that of *Antilochus* and *Menelaus*, and *Apollo's* sending a Phantom to frighten the Horses of *Polynices*, to *Minerva's* breaking the Chariot of *Eumelus* : nay, our Author is so very unpolite to the Ladies, as to undervalue a fair Female, and give her to the Loser as *Homer* has done, to the great Indignation of *Madam Ducier*.

*Leander*, Youth enamour'd!—as he swims, 765  
 The Surge Sky-tinctur'd plays around his Limbs :  
 He oars himself with shifting Arms, and braves  
 With his opposing Breast the swelling Waves.  
 You would not think a single Hair was dry.  
 In Front of him (deep Anguish in her Eye) 770  
 The *Sestian* Damsel on a Turret's Height  
 Stands, musing on the Tapers dying Light.  
 These Gifts *Adraustus* to the Victors gave,  
 And cheer'd the *Theban* with a female Slave.  
 He then invites to urge on Foot the Race, 775  
 And Meeds assigns the Conq'rors Speed to grace :  
 An useful Exercise in Time of Peace  
 At sacred Rites, nor when those Times shall cease  
 In War unuseful, when meer Valour fails,  
 And with superior Arms the Foe prevails. 780  
 First *Idas* in the Lifts appears : his Brows  
 Late shaded with *Olympic* Olive-Boughs ;  
 The *Pisans* and *Eleans* back his Cause  
 With previous Shouts, and crown him with Applause.  
 Next *Alcon* (*Sycion* his native Place) 785  
 And *Phædimus*, twice Victor in the Race ;  
 Then *Dymas* comes, once fleetier than the Steed,  
 But Length of Years had lessen'd half his Speed ;  
 And many others, whom, tho' not the last  
 In Fame, the Vulgar ignorant o'erpass. 799

v. 775. *An useful Exercise in Time*] Monsieur Catron in his Note  
 on the 377th Line of the 5th Book of *Virgil's Æneid*, remarks,  
 that the Foot Race was a military Exercise : the young *Roman* Sol-  
 diers were instructed in it, according to *Vegetius*. Agility being of  
 great Use in War.

But the thick Circus for th' *Arcadian* cries ;  
 The shifting Murmurs eccho in the Skies.  
 Mark'd with his Parent's Swiftnefs.—Who will own  
*Menalian Atalanta's* Name unknown,  
 And \* Footsteps, from her Suitors well-conceal'd? 795  
 The Mother in her Offspring shines reveal'd :  
 From Pole to Pole his Glory unconfin'd  
 Extends.—Fame says, he caught full many a Hind  
 In th' open Plain, and stopp'd the rapid Course  
 Of Darts and Arrows, sent with mighty Force. 800  
 At length th' expected Warrior with a Bound  
 Springs forth, and leaps, exulting, on the Ground :  
 Soon as his Robe ungirt aside he threw,  
 The lovely Youth unfolds to public View  
 His well-turn'd Limbs, and falling Shoulders made 805  
 More beautiful than Art hath e'er pourtray'd :  
 Tho' all was fair, nor aught admir'd the most,  
 His Face was in his graceful Body lost.  
 Yet scorning Beauty's Praise, he drives away  
 Th' admiring Crowd, nor patient of Delay, 810  
 Makes his Limbs supple for the future Toil,  
 And stains his Skin with fat *Palladian* Oil.  
 The rest avail themselves of his Design :  
 Smear'd with the Juice, their glossy Bodies shine.  
 Thus in a Calm when *Cynthia's* starry Train 815  
 Gleam on the placid Surface of the Main ;

\* By leaving no Marks of them in the Sand.

v. 806. *His Face was in his graceful*] This Observation of the Poet tallies with a Remark of Lady M. W. Montague in one of her Letters, viz. ' that if Women were to go naked their Faces would ' be the least regarded.'

v. 813. *Thus in a Calm when Cynthia's.* This Simile, I must confess, is one of those *nugæ canoræ*, which according to Horace, should

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And the fair Image of the spangled Sphere  
 Vibrates on Ocean, all Things gay appear ;  
 But brighter over all the Evening Star  
 Emits his Beams, conspicuous from afar, 820  
 And radiant as in highest Heav'n he glows,  
 Such Splendors in the World of Waters shows.  
*Idas* succeeds, the next in Form and Fame  
 Of Speed, and nearly in his Age the same :  
 Yet hasten'd on by Toil, the Down began 825  
 To cloath his Cheeks, and mark the future Man,  
 And some faint Semblance of a Beard was seen  
 Amidst the Length of Hair, that cloud his Mien.  
 Then rightly they fore-run th' approaching Race,  
 Explore their Limbs, and try each various Pace, 830  
 Instruct themselves in ev'ry needful Art,  
 And weigh their Strength and Vigour, e'er they start;  
 They bend their Knees as ready for the Test,  
 And strike with hearty Claps their slipp'ry Breast,  
 Then lift their Legs, tho' heated, free and light, 835  
 And put a sudden Period to their Flight.  
 Soon as the Rule had measur'd out the Plain,  
 And smooth'd it to their Feet, the naked Train  
 Impetuous from the destin'd Barrier flew,  
 And glitter'd in the Sun, like Morning Dew. 840  
 The rapid Coursers, that late pass'd the Mead,  
 Seem to have run with far inferior Speed.  
 You'd think, so many Arrows from the Throng  
 Of *Partbians* or *Cydonians* flew along.

should never take Place. There is great Strength of Imagery and Expression in it, but then it no Ways illustrates the Thing described, and has only a general Allusion to the Effects of the Oil in giving a Gloss to their Skins, and *Parthenopæus's* Superiority of Beauty.

Thus when a Herd of fleet *Hircanian* Deer 845  
 In the lone Desert hear, or seem to hear  
 The hungry Lion's distant Roar, away  
 They scour in Troops, collected by Dismay,  
 And blind with Terror ; as they beat the Ground,  
 Their clashing Horns incessantly resound. 850  
 Th' *Arcadian* leads the Race, and as he flies,  
 Swift as the Wind, eludes their dazzled Eyes :  
 Him *Idas* prest, and meas'ring Pace by Pace,  
 Breath'd on his Shoulders, as he urg'd the Race.  
 Young *Dymus*, Side by Side, his Rival plies, 855  
 And leaves a doubtful Prospect of the Prize :  
 Them *Alcom* chaces.—From th' *Arcadian's* Crown  
 A golden Lock of Hair unshorn hung down ;  
 This for *Diana*, as a Gift, he fed,  
 From his most tender Age, and vainly said, 860  
 That on his Country's Altars it should burn,  
 Should he from *Thebes* a Conqueror return ;  
 Now loose and flowing largely down behind,  
 It yields at ev'ry adverse Blast of Wind,  
 And both impedes himself, and (as it flies) 865  
 Obscures his Rival's View, and shades his Eyes,  
 Soon as the Youth perceiv'd th' Advantage giv'n,  
 And Time for Fraud, with rival Fury driv'n,

v. 865. *Soon as the Youth*] In this Foot Race *Statius* has perhaps shewn more Judgment than either *Homer* or *Virgil*. The former makes *Ajax* lose the Victory through a Fall occasioned by *Minerva's* Resentment of his Disrespect in not invoking her (which is scarcely *dignus vindice nodus*) in the latter, *Nisus* is unjust to his Adversary in Favour of his Friend, so that *Euryalus* wins the Race by a palpable Fraud (as Mr. *Pope* expresses it) and yet the Poet gives him the greater Prize. Now the Action of *Idas's* pulling *Parthenopæus* back, is certainly more natural, and *Adrastus* acts more impartially and prudently than *Aeneas* in making them run again.

(Just as th' *Arcadian* Prince with rapid Pace  
 Approach'd th' extremest Limit of the Race) 870  
 He seiz'd, he pull'd him backward by his Hair,  
 And touch'd the Goal first, baffling all his Care.  
 Th' *Arcadians* storm'd, and from the Circus bent  
 Their Steps, and vow'd the Treach'ry to resent,  
 Should they refuse to render to his Hands 875  
 The ravish'd Honours which his Speed demands.  
 There are, to whom these Arts give no Disgust,  
 Mean while *Parthenopæus* heaps with Dust  
 And Sand his weeping Eyes and beauteous Face :  
 The Tears augment and heighten ev'ry Grace. 880  
 One while with bloody Nail his Breast he tears,  
 And then his lovely Face and guilty Hairs.  
 On ev'ry Side discordant Clamours rise,  
 At length, the Matter weigh'd, *Adrastus* cries,  
 O Youths, desist from Strife.—The Prize again 885  
 Shall be contended fairly on the Plain ;  
 But take a diff'rent Path: that Side the Field  
 To guileful *Idas*, this to thee we yield.  
 No more be Want of Speed by Craft supply'd.  
 The Rivals heard, and by his Words abide. 890  
 Then suppliant the *Tegæan* Chief adores  
 Th' immoral Pow'rs, and silently implores.  
 O *Phæbe*, Queen of Forests (for to thee  
 This Lock grew sacred from my own Decree,  
 And from this Vow arises my Disgrace) 895  
 If aught of Merit in the sylvan Chace  
 My Mother has display'd, or ought I claim,  
 Let not *Arcadia* prove such bitter Shame,  
 Nor *Thebes* from hence a partial Omen draw, 900  
 That *Cynthia* favours those who break her Law.

The Goddess heard his Pray'r.—Then strait he leaves  
 The Barrier: scarce the Ground his Course perceives;  
 Scarce do his Feet one Grain of Sand displace,  
 Nor in the level Dust appears his Trace.  
 He rush'd then to the Goal with joyful Cries, 905  
 And to the Monarch back exulting, flies:  
 The promis' Palm his raging Grief appeas'd.  
 Now finish'd was the Race, and all were pleas'd:  
*Parthenopæus* bore a Steed away  
 High-bred, the foremost Honour of the Day: 910  
 The crafty *Idas* a bright Shield possess'd,  
 And *Lycian* Shafts, much priz'd, content the rest.  
 He then demands. what Warrior, skill'd to throw  
 The Disk, his Strength of Arm and Art will show?  
 By the good Monarch *Pterelas* was sent 915  
 To fetch the Premium: his whole Body bent  
 Scarce on the Ground he lays the slipp'ry Mass  
 (For the vast Quoit was form'd of weighty Brass.)  
 The silent *Greeks* inspect with curious Eyes  
 The Disk, and weigh the Labour, e'er they rise. 920  
 A Crowd then starts.—Two of *Achæan* Race,  
 At *Ephyre* three boast their native Place;  
 From noted *Pisa* one deriv'd his Birth,  
 The seventh had cultur'd *Acarmania's* Earth.  
 More in the Contest too a Share had held, 925  
 But the loud Clamours of the Pit impell'd  
*Hippomedon*, and fir'd his ardent Soul:  
 Tow'ring he rose, and shew'd a larger Bowl.

903. Scarce do his Feet] *Homer* gives us a similar Image in his Description of the Foot-Race, *Iliad*, B. 23. V. 763.

This rather seize, young Warriors, who aspire  
 To break the Walls of *Thebes*, and wrap in Fire 930  
 Her loftiest Bulwarks: but not ev'ry Hand  
 Yon Disk of Size enormous can command:  
 This said, he lifts (not all his Strength apply'd)  
 The brazen Mass, and threw with Ease aside.  
 Astonish'd now they stand aloof, and yield 935  
 Scarce *Pblegyas* and *Meneſtheus* kept the Field.  
 (Nor had these stood the Contest out, but Shame  
 And their great Friends their Perseverance claim)  
 To these spontaneously the rest give Place,  
 And turn inglorious, but without Disgrace, 940  
 Such as the Targe of *Mars* in *Thracian* Fields,  
 A noxious Light o'er all *Pangæa* yields,  
 Wide-scatt'ring Splendors strikes the Sun with Fear,  
 And deeply sounds beneath the heav'nly Spear.  
 First rose *Pisæan Pblegyas* with Applause: 945  
 His noted Skill from other Objects draws  
 Their Eyes aside: now in the golden Sand  
 He roughens both his Quoit and better Hand;  
 The Dust then shaken off upon the Pit,  
 He turns it round, and tries, which Side will fit 950  
 His Arm and Fingers best, for well he knew  
 The much-lov'd Game, and ponder'd, e'er he threw.  
 Oft at a Sacrifice, and ritual Game  
 Was he renown'd (if we may credit Fame)  
 Where widest flows *Alpheos*, to throw o'er 955  
 The Disk unwetted to the farthest Shore.  
 Hence trusting to his Art, nor taught to yield,  
 He measures the rough Acres of the Field,  
 And Tracts celestial with his better Hand,  
 And, bending either Knee towards the Strand, 960  
 He



He calls forth all his Vigour, lifts on high  
 The massy Quoit, and whirls it in the Sky :  
 Rapid it flies, ascending in its Flight,  
 And, whilst it seems quick-falling, grows in Height.  
 At length, exhausted all its Force, more slow 965  
 The Globe return'd, and press'd the Plain below.  
 Thus sever'd from th' astonish'd Stars, the Ball  
 Of darken'd *Phæbe* oft is seen to fall ;  
 The Nations, on the mighty Change intent,  
 Their Timbrels strike, and fear in vain th' Event ; 970  
 Whilst the victorious Hag at Distance smiles,  
 To see her Charms succeed and magic Wiles.  
 The *Greeks* applaud him : nor on level Land  
 He fears *Hippomedon's* superior Hand.  
 But Fortune, who her ev'ry Art employs 975  
 To crush Ambition, and with Glee destroys  
 The Structure of immod'rate Hope, deprives,  
 His Arm of Strength. In vain with her he strives.  
 He now, prepar'd a Length of Space to gain,  
 Low-bending to the Task: beneath the Strain — 980  
 The Muscles of his vig'rous Body swell :  
 When lo! before his Feet the Discus fell,  
 Short of his Vow, and faithless to his Hand :  
 His Comrades sigh, his Foes their Joys command.  
*Menestheus* then succeeds with timid Art 985  
 To the bold Task, and acts the cautious Part :

v. 965. *Thus sever'd*] The Poet in this Simile alludes to a received Notion of the antients, that the Eclipses of the Moon were occasioned by magic Spells ; at which Time they played on Timbrels, Cymbals and other musical Instruments, to forward her Delivery, supposing her to be in Labour.

To *Maia*'s winged Offspring much he pray'd,  
 And with heap'd Dust the Discus rougher made.  
 Tho' sent with far less Vigour than before,  
 It speeds, nor stops till it had measur'd o'er 990  
 Full half the Circus.—A deep, hollow Sound  
 Ensues, and a fix'd Arrow marks the Ground.  
*Hippomedon* with boding Heart succeeds  
 The third, nor to the forceful Contest speeds;  
 For much he ponders in his Mind the Woe 995  
 Of *Pblegyas*, and *Manestheus*' lucky Throw.  
 He lifts the Quoit, accustom'd to his Hand,  
 And poising it aloft at his Command,  
 Consults his val'rous Arms, and hardy Side,  
 And hurls it (his whole Art and Strength apply'd, 1000  
 And follows it himself.—The Discus flies  
 With horrid Bound along the vacant Skies,  
 And, mindful of the Hand's directing Force,  
 At Distance keeps the Tenor of its Course;  
 Nor doubtfully the vanquish'd Chief it pass'd, 1005  
 Beside the other's Limit nearly cast;  
 But far beyond *Menestheus*' Mark it took  
 Its Stand, and, as portending Ruin, shook  
 The Pillars that support the sylvan Scene,  
 And shady Roof, imbow'rd with living Green. 1010  
 Such was the Stone from *Ætna*'s vap'rous Height  
 The *Cyclop* threw, his Hand unrul'd by Sight  
 When, guided by the dashing of the Flood,  
*Ulysses*' hostile Vessel he pursu'd.

v. 1012. *Ulysses*'] After this Verse follow three others in the Earl  
 of Arundel's Manuscript Copy; But as they are to be found in no  
 other Book, and Statius has so many Similes drawn from this At-  
 tack of the Giants, that I thought it needless to translate them,

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*Adrastus* to the Victor then assigns 1015  
 As the first Prize, a Tiger's Hide that shines  
 With yellow Hem, refulgent to behold :  
 The Sharpness of the Claws was dull'd with Gold.  
 With *Gnosſian* Bow and Shafts *Menestheus* hies  
 Content.—To luckless *Pblegyas* then he cries. 1020  
 Accept this Sword, *Pelaſgus*' Aid and Pride,  
 Since adverſe Fortune has the Palm deny'd ;  
 Nor will th' invidious Victor grieve to ſee  
 This Gift allotted thee by my Decree.  
 Decide we now, who beſt the Cæſtus wields : 1025  
 Skill in this Feat of Vigour ſcarcely yields  
 To Conteſts of the Sword, and ſteely Blows,  
 At this *Argolic Capaneus* uproſe.  
 Fierce to deſcry, and fierce to be deſcry'd ;  
 And, while upon his Arm the Gloves he ty'd, 1030  
 Cut out of raw Bull-hides, and caſ'd with Lead,  
 As hard as they, exultingly he ſaid :  
 Stands there a Youth amidſt yon num'rous Crew,  
 Here let him iſſue forth in public View ?  
 Yet had I rather, for my Country's Sake, 1035  
 Some *Theban* Rival would the Challenge take,  
 Whom I might juſtly hurl to *Pluto's* Shore,  
 Nor ſtain my ſtronger Hand. with ſocial Gore.

though they are not deſtitute of poetical Merit, as the Reader may ſee.

Sic et Aloidæ, cum jam celaret Olympum  
 Deſuper Oſſa rigens, ipſum glaciale ferebat  
 Pelion, et trepido ſperabant jungere cœlo.

v. 1035. *Yet had I rather*] However diſguſted we may be with the bullying Menaces of *Capaneus*, we cannot but be pleaſed with the Patriotiſm he diſplays on this Occaſion.—He is the *Epeus* of *Homer*, and *Darus* of *Virgil*.

He said, and ceas'd.—Fear held them mute, they gaze  
In stupid Wonder, and in wild Amaze. 1040

At length *Alcidamas* from 'midst the Train  
Of naked *Spartans* springs forth on the Plain,  
Unhop'd.—The *Doric* Troops with Wonder ey'd  
Their King: his Comrades knew that he rely'd,  
More than on brutal Strength, on certain Rules, 1045  
Train'd up by *Pollux* in the sacred Schools.

The God himself both fix'd his Hands and form'd  
His youthful Arms, by holy Friendship warm'd;  
Oft wou'd he place him fronting, and admire  
His daring Spirit, nor unequal Ire, 1050

Then catch him up, exulting, his own Breast  
With Fervour to his naked Body press'd:  
Him *Capaneus* derides with threat'ning Hands,  
And, pitying, a more equal Foe demands:  
E'en forc'd to Combat, his proud Soul rebels, 1055  
And his late languid Neck with Fury swells.

Preparing for the Combat, high in Air  
Their thund'ring Hands th' impetuous Champions rear:  
A Fence their Arms extended form around  
Their Faces, and exclude each future Wound. 1060

Such Space of Limbs the Chief of *Argos* shews,  
And staring Bones as *Tityos* might disclose,  
Shou'd the fell *Stygian* Vultures cease to feed,  
And suffer him to rise, from Torture freed.

The *Spartan* (for his Strength exceeds his Years) 1065  
In Look a Boy, in Act a Man appears.

Such is the Prospect of his riper Age,  
That each Spectator mourns his early Rage,  
And, lest he lavish too much Blood away,  
Wish to behold a Period to the Fray.

Nor all at once their Wrath and Blows arise ;  
 They stay to gratify their curious Eyes  
 In gazing on each other, and expect,  
 Each that his Foe wou'd the first Blow direct.  
 Awhile alternate Fears their Wrath assuage, 1075  
 And Caution's calmer Rules were join'd to Rage.  
 Each with his Hands the vacant Air provokes,  
 And blunts the Gauntlets with repeated Strokes.  
 This husbands well his Strength, (although he glows  
 With Ire) and deals more sparingly his Blows : 1080  
 That, eager of Revenge, himself neglects,  
 And rushes blindly on.—No Skill directs  
 His Random-Strokes : His Teeth in vain he grinds,  
 And wreaks his hasty Vengeance on the Winds ;  
 For, deeply vers'd in all his Country's Art, 1085  
 The wary *Spartan* parries off in Part,  
 Or shuns his Rival's Blows.—One while he bows  
 His Head, and by Compliance 'scapes the Blows ;  
 Then his quick Hands aside the Gauntlets beat,  
 His Head thrown back, advancing with his Feet. 1090  
 Oft too (so much he has at his Command  
 The Game, and such the Vigour of his Hand)  
 He boldly closes with the Foe, nor fears  
 His Giant-Force, confirm'd by Length of Years,  
 But on him leaps, as on some frowning Rock 1095  
 A Billow falls, then, broken with the Shock,

v. 1076. *This husbands well his Strength*] Upon Comparison, I believe, this Game of the *Cæstus* will not be thought inferior to the foregoing in any Respect. The vain-glorious Fury of *Capaneus*, the Spirit and Adroitness of the young *Spartan*, and the different Movements, Attitudes, and Incidents of the Combat are described in a very masterly Manner.

Recoils.—Thus, wheeling round the furious Foe,  
 He plies him, unrepaid, with many a Blow.  
 He lifts his Hand, and, flourishing around,  
 Seems on his Flank and Eyes to aim a Wound : 1106  
 This Feint recalls him from his proper Guard ;  
 And, whilst the threat'ned Part he strives to ward,  
 Between his Hands descends a sudden Blow,  
 And, wounding, marks the Middle of his Brow.  
 The Blood now spins forth, and a tepid Rill 1107  
 Stains either Temple ; yet the Warrior still  
 Perceives it not, but, rolling round his Eyes,  
 Much wonders, why the sudden Murmurs rise :  
 But, as by Chance he drew back o'er his Head  
 His weary Hand, and saw the Gauntlets red, 1110  
 As some fierce Tyger wounded with a Dart,  
 Or gen'rous Lion, glowing with the Smart,

v. 1112. *Glowing with the Smart*] Notwithstanding what Mr. Pope, and Mr. Hind after him have advanced, in Relation to our Author's studied Originality, in his Description of the funeral Games, there are several Traits in it, which bespeak it to be a Copy of that in the Fifth Book of *Virgil's Æneid*, v. 53. the Lines to which this Note refers, are evidently imitated from the following;

At non tardatus casu, neque territus Heros,  
 Acrior ad pugnam redit, ac vim fuscitat ira.  
 Tum pudor incendit vires, et conscia Virtus :  
 Præcipitemque Daren ardens agit æquore toto ;

Again,

Behold again the *Spartan* Shifts renew'd !  
 As the Foe, &c.

Are borrowed from

Offendit dextram insurgens Entellus, et alte  
 Extulit : Ille ictum venientem a vortice velox  
 Providit, celerique elapsus corpore cessit.  
 Entellus vires in ventum effudit, et ultro  
 Ipse gravis graviterque ad terram pondere vasto  
 Concidit :—

Headlong he drives the Youth o'er all the Field,  
 Forc'd to give Ground, yet still averse to yield;  
 And, gnashing horribly his Teeth, he throws 1115  
 His Hands about, and multiplies his Blows.  
 His Rage is spent in Air: his Strokes in Part  
 Fall on the Cæstus.—With superior Art,  
 And active Speed, the *Spartan* Youth bewares  
 A Thousand Deaths, that rattle in his Ears: 1120  
 Yet, not unmindful of his Art he hies,  
 But turns his Face, and combats as he flies.  
 Short Pantings now succeed, and Toil subdues  
 Their harrafs'd Limbs, more slowly he pursues,  
 And t'other flies:—At length their fault'ring Knees  
 Succumb, and both accept a Truce of Ease. 1126  
 Thus when (a Signal giv'n) the Seamen yield  
 To the long Labours of the wat'ry Field;  
 Short is their Rest: The Watch-word soon restores  
 Their vig'rous Toils, and they resume their Oars. 1130  
 Behold again the *Spartan* Shifts renew'd!  
 As his Foe blindly rushing on he view'd,  
 He falls spontaneously—with thund'ring Sound  
 Th' Affaillant pitches headlong on the Ground.  
 The wily Stripling struck him ere he rose, 1135  
 And Smiles of Joy alloy'd with Terror shews.  
 Th' *Inachians* shout:—less loud the Sea-beat Shore,  
 And Forests, shook by blust'ring *Boreas*, roar.  
 But when *Adrastus* saw the Giant rise,  
 And lift his Hands for horrid Deeds, he cries 1140  
 Haste, haste, my Friends, I pray, and interpose:  
 With Rage, unutterable Rage he glows.  
 Relinquish the Palm and Prize to his Demands,  
 And snatch the dying *Spartan* from his Hands.

Left, when his jealous Wrath is at the full, 1145  
 He dash within the Brain his batter'd Skull.  
*Hippomedon* and *Oeneus'* Son obey  
 Th' Injunctions of the King without Delay ;  
 Yet scarce with all their Art and Force combin'd  
 Restrain his Hands, and bend his stubborn Mind. 1150  
 Away—The Vict'ry's thine—'Tis more than Fame  
 To spare the Vanquish'd.—His Connections claim  
 Some small Regard—a Partner in the Fight.—  
 Th' inexorable Chief receives with Slight  
 Their Counsels, and, rejecting with his Hands 1155  
 The proffer'd Palm and Mail, his Foe demands,  
 And cries—Go to, and give my Vengeance Way,  
 Shall I not dig his Eyes out, and repay  
 Those female Tricks (with which he hop'd to gain  
 The Prize, and Favour of a partial Train) 1160  
 And, mindless of his sorrowing Patron, doom  
 His shapeless Body to the silent Tomb ?  
 He said :—His Comrades turn'd him far aside,  
 While, swoln with Ire, the Conquest he deny'd.  
 The *Spartan* Troops deride his Threats and raise 1165  
 Peals of Applause, and shout their Champion's Praise.  
 Now, conscious of his Skill in ev'ry Game,  
*Oenides* burns to win the Prize of Fame.

v. 1158. *Shall I not dig his Eyes out?* I never found myself more  
 at a Loss how to vindicate my Author, than in the Passage before  
 us. If he ever deserved the Censure of having made his Heroes  
 too brutal and inhuman, he has certainly done it in this Place.  
 The Picture of *Capaneus* is drawn with too great a Violence of Fea-  
 tures : and it is inconceivable, that any one could be so horridly  
 revengeful on being foil'd in a Trial of Skill only.

v. 1165. *Now, conscious* } The Poet omits no Opportunity of com-  
 plimenting *Tydeus*. The other Warriors excel in one Game only,  
 whereas he is represented as equally well versed in all of them.



BOOK VI. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 291

In the Foot-Race the foremost Name he held,  
And in the Quoit and Cæstus both excell'd : 1170  
Yet *Castor's* Glory, and athletic Oil  
Delight his Heart above all other Toil.  
Thus was he wont his peaceful Hours to spend,  
And Mind, fatigu'd with warlike Cares unbend.  
Against the mightiest Champions had he stood, 1175  
Who dwelt near *Acbelous'* stormy Flood,  
And won (Heav'n taught) the Honours of the Day.  
Soon then as Thirst of Glory calls away  
The Youths, most noted for athletic Toils,  
He strips his Back of the terrific Spoils 1180  
(The *Caledonian* Monster's bristly Hide)  
*Agyllæus*, to *Cleone's* Race ally'd,  
'Gainst him his ample Limbs, high-tow'ring, rears,  
Nor less than *Hercules* himself appears ;  
Such o'er the rest his brawny Shoulders rise, 1185  
And his huge Bulk exceeds the human Size :  
Yet not that hardy Force, his Sire cou'd boast  
Descends to him :—his Strength in Bulk was lost,  
And a Luxuriancy of Blood : his Skin  
Was smooth without, from Muscles free within. 1190  
Hence only bold *Qenides* hopes t'o'erthrow  
Th' unwieldy Might of his gigantic Foe ;  
For tho' the smallest of the *Grecian* Throng,  
His Bones were large, his Arms supremely strong,  
And full of Sinews : nor was such a Mind,  
And so great Strength of Nature e'er confin'd

This inclines me to think, *Statius* intended him as the chief Character in his Poems.

In a less Body.—When with fragrant Oil  
 Their Limbs were render'd supple for the Toil,  
 They spring impetuous from the circling Train,  
 And occupy the Middle of the Plain: 1200  
 Then their wet Limbs with Dust by Turns they dry'd,  
 And held their Arms bent in; but distant wide.  
 Now *Tydeus* brings by Craft *Agyllus* down  
 (His Height upon a Level with his own)  
 And bends him forward, whilst unmov'd he stands  
 With stooping Back and Knees that sought the Sands.  
 As on the Cloud-wrapt *Alps* the Cypress, Queen  
 Of Trees, and fairest in the sylvan Scene,  
 To whistling Winds her Head, obsequious, bends,  
 (Tho' on the Root for Stay she scarce depends) 1205  
 And, bowing, almost seems to kiss the Plain,  
 Then sudden shoots up in the Skies again.  
 Spontaneous thus *Agyllus* presses down  
 His Limbs gigantic, and with many a Groan  
 Bends himself double on his little Foe: 1210  
 And now their Hands alternate deal a Blow;  
 Necks, Breasts, Legs, Foreheads, Shoulders, Sides, and  
 Thighs  
 Beneath the Strokes in sudden Tumours rise.  
 On Tiptoe rais'd, their Heads obliquely bent,  
 Each hangs on each, stretch'd out at full Extent. 1220

v. 1207. *As on the cloud-wrapt Alps, &c.*] This Simile [does not represent the Posture of the Wrestlers so well as that in the 23<sup>d</sup> Book of *Homer's Iliad*, Verse 712.

Ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀμύνοντες, τὴς τε κλυτὸς ἥραρς τίκτων,  
 Δάματος ὑψηλοῖο, βίας ἀνιμῶν ἀλίστων.

v. 1220. *Scarce with such Wrath*] This Comparison is copied from *Virgil's Æneid*, Book 12, Verse 715, and is not, I think inferior to the Original.

Scarce with such Wrath two Leading-Bulls maintain  
 The Conflict: in the Middle of the Plain  
 Stands the fair Cause, expecting which will lead  
 The subject Herds, and rule the spacious Mead.  
 With clashing Horns the Combatants engage, 1225  
 Love heals their Wounds, and fans their kindled Rage.  
 As the wild Boar (his Eye-balls flashing Fire)  
 Whets his dull Tusks, in Height of jealous Ire,  
 Or as the shapeless Bear disputes the Prey  
 With shaggy Gripes.—Thus *Tydeus* urg'd the Fray, 1230  
 And brav'd the sultry Sun, and dusty Toil:  
 Close was his Skin, inur'd with frequent Toil,  
 And his rough Limbs well-muscled.—But his Foe,  
 Impair'd with Labour, 'gan to puff and blow,  
 And sick to Death, gapes oft with Strefs of Pain, 1235  
 And shakes the high-heap'd Sand upon the Plain  
 With copious Streams of Sweat, and, unsurvey'd,  
 By catching at the Ground, his Breast upstay'd.  
*Tydeus* pursues, and while with threat'ning Eyes  
 He mark'd his Neck, runs full between his Thighs: 1240  
 But his Hands balk the Purpose of his Mind,  
 And fall far short of what the Chief design'd.  
 Prone fell the Giant-Warrior, and oppress'd  
 With wide Extent of Ruin all his Breast.

Ac velut ingenti Silâ, summove Taburno,  
 Cum duo conversis inimica in prælia tauri  
 Frontibus incurrunt, pavidi cessere Magistri:  
 Stat pecus omne metu mutum, mussantque juvencæ,  
 Quis pecori imperitet, quem tota armenta sequantur:  
 Illi inter sese multa vi vulnera miscant,  
 Cornuaque obnixi infigunt, & sanguine largo  
 Colla, armosque lavant, gemitu nemus omne remugit.

Thus when th' *Ibërian* seeks some cavern'd Height 1245  
 With Metal fraught, and leaves the vital Light,  
 Ere the rent Earth sends forth a sudden Sound,  
 And trembles o'er his Head the pendant Ground,  
 His Body crush'd and pent beneath the Weight  
 Of the burst Mount, and wrapt in gloomy Fate, 1250  
 A Document of punish'd Av'rice lies,  
 Nor the free Soul regains its kindred Skies.  
*Oenides*, tho' beneath the Foe he lay,  
 Rises in Spirits, and without Delay,  
 From the huge Grasp, and heavy Burden freed 1255  
 Th' eluded Warrior compasses with Speed,  
 And fastens sudden on his Back, then holds  
 His purfy Sides, embrac'd in rigid Folds;  
 Next, pressing either Ham with either Knee,  
 While the foil'd Champion strove in vain to free 1260  
 His Limbs fast-bound, and thrust beneath his Side  
 His Hand (O wonderful to be descry'd!)  
 He lifts the Giant, rested on his Breast,  
 Thus in his Arms (Fame says) *Alcides* prest  
 His Earth-born Foe, and from his Mother-Ground 1265  
 Uprais'd, when now the secret Fraud he found,  
 Nor Hope was longer left to fall, or reach  
 With his broad Feet the Surface of the Beach.  
 A joyful Shout ensues, and strikes the Sky,  
 Rais'd by the Troops.—Then poising him on high, 1270  
 Sudden, and of his own Accord again  
 He threw him down obliquely on the Plain,

v. 1264. *Thus in his Arms*] Every Time *Antarus* touched the Earth,  
 he acquired fresh Vigour. *Lucan* has described this Combat with  
 infinite Spirit in the 4th Book of his *Phar.* Verse 611.

And following as he fell, his Right-Hand plac'd  
 Upon his Neck, his Feet upon his Waist.  
 Thus press'd. no more Resistance had he shewn, 1275  
 But Shame impells him on, and Shame alone.  
 His Belly wide-extended on the Ground,  
 Prostrate he lies.—At length when now he found  
 His Sense returning, up he rose again,  
 And left his Form imprinted on the Plain. 1280  
 But *Tydeus*, gifted with the Palm and Prize  
 Of glitt'ring Arms, in Height of Transport, cries  
 Not half so long, I ween, had he withstood,  
 But *Thebes* has drank too freely of my Blood.  
 These honest Wounds the glorious Fact attest. 1285  
 While thus he spake, he bar'd his manly Breast,  
 And gave the Prizes to his menial Crew :  
*Agyllus* takes the slighted Mail, his Due.  
 The *Theban* then, yet unconstrain'd by Fate,  
 And *Agreus*, urg'd with Thirst of Fame, not Hate, 1290  
 Advance with naked Swords (in Armour clad)  
 To dare the Combat : but the King forbad.  
 O Youths, great Store of Death will soon betide :  
 Then let your eager Rage for Blood subside ;  
 Your Courage, till the Fight begins, restrain : 1295  
 And thou, for whom we've left our own Domain,  
 Dispeopling many Cities, do not trust  
 Thy Life to Chance, nor thro' immod'rate Lust  
 Of Glory, grant the Wishes of thy Foes,  
 And thy fell Brother's Vows (ye Pow'rs oppose) 1300

v. 1290 *But the King forbad*] *Homer* having been blamed by some of the Antients for describing this barbarous and shocking Combat, *Statius* has very prudently waded it, and rendered *Adrastus* highly amiable by his Prohibition of it.

Then a gilt Helm he gives in both their Hands ;  
 And strait, in Honour of his Son, commands  
 The Crowd to wreath his Brows, and by the Name  
 Of Conqueror of *Thebes*, proclaim his Fame.  
 The rig'rous Fates this Omen render vain, 1305  
 The Nobles urge the Monarch, to sustain  
 A Part in the funereal Games, and crown  
 The Rites himself :—and left one Chief alone  
 Of all the sev'n no Victory should gain,  
 With earnest Zeal they beg, that he will deign 1310  
 In Archery to prove his matchless Art,  
 Or hurl with dextrous Skill the flying Dart,  
 The King assents, and, follow'd by a Train  
 Of Youths, descends with Joy upon the Plain :  
 The Squire behind him bears at his Command 1315  
 A Bow, and light-wing'd Arrows in his Hand,  
 A Wild-Ash far beyond the Circus lies,  
 The destin'd Mark, at which his Arrow flies,  
 Who can deny, that ev'ry Omen springs  
 From hidden Causes of terrestrial Things ? 1320

v. 1319. *Who can deny*] This Exclamation, as well as many other Passages in this Work, bespeak our Author to have been of a very superstitious Turn of Mind.

I cannot see how the Poet can stile this Attempt a Contest, and its Success a Victory, when there was no Antagonist. It is a mere Feat of Archery.—*Adrastus* is desired by his Nobles to give a public Proof of his Skill either in shooting or darting. He chooses the former, and singling out a Tree which grew on the farther Side of the Circus, shoots, and hits the Mark.—The Incident of the Arrow's returning back, though it borders upon the marvellous, is as natural as that of *Aceses's* kindling : but the Application of it to the Event it is intended to prognosticate is certainly more just and proper than *Virgil's* alluding either to the firing of the Ships or the *Julium Sidus*, as *Messieurs Catrou* and *Warton* have conjectured.

The Book of Fate lies open. We refuse  
 The ready Prescience, offer'd to our Views ;  
 We put the Pow'r to hurt in Fortune's Hands :  
 And thus for mere Chance-work each Omen stands.  
 The fatal Arrow measur'd o'er the Ground, 1325  
 And in the Tree infix'd a slender Wound ;  
 Then (Sight tremendous !) by the self-same Track,  
 And Air it cleav'd before, comes flying back,  
 Kept to the End the Tenour of the Way,  
 And falling, near the well-known Quiver lay, 1330  
 Th' erroneous Chiefs mislead the list'ning Crowds ;  
 These think it driven by rencounting Clouds,  
 And Winds.—Those hold, that the re-acting Wood  
 Impell'd it back again.—None understood  
 The great Event, and Sequel clearly shown. 1345  
 Propitious was the War to him alone :  
 And the Shaft promis'd its much favour'd Lord,  
 A safe Return, and Rescue from the Sword.





THE  
THEBAID  
OF  
STATIUS,  
TRANSLATED INTO  
*ENGLISH* VERSE,  
WITH  
NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS.

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**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE SEVENTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

**J**UPITER *angered at the Delays of the Grecian Army, sends Mercury to Mars to command him to forward the War. The Temple of that Deity is described. Then follows Adrastus's Speech over the Sepulchre of Archemorus. Mars, by Means of Terror, incites the Grecians to resume their March to Thebes. Bacchus intercedes for his native City with Jupiter, who pacifies him with Promises of a Respite. The Theban Troops and Auxiliaries are drawn out to Battle. Phorbas gives an Account of the Commanders of them to Antigone, who ascends one of the Towers for that Purpose. Eteocles harangues his Army. The Greeks are terrified with several Omens in their Route to Thebes. Jocasta with her two Daughters ventures into the Enemies Camp, in Order to bring about a Reconciliation between the two Brothers, which she had effected, had not the Greeks killed two Tigers belonging to Bacchus. Hostilities commencing, several of Note are slain on both Sides. Amphiaraus, after a great Slaughter of the Enemy, is swallowed up by an Earthquake, with an Account of which Prodigy the Book ends.*

## T H E

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE SEVENTH.

**I**NDIGNANT now, th' etherial King survey'd  
 The *Theban* War by fun'ral Games delay'd,  
 And shook his Head, beneath the moving God  
 From Pole to Pole the starry Regions nod,  
 And *Atlas*, with unwonted Weight oppress'd, 5  
 To the great Author of the Shock address'd  
 His just Complaint.—To *Maia*'s winged Son  
 In awful Tone th' Almighty thus begun.  
*Cyllenius*, mount the Winds and speed thy Flight  
 With swift Descent from Heav'n's imperial Height. 10  
 To where in Air the *Thracian* Domes arise,  
 And fair *Calysto* binds the northern Skies,

v. 1. *Indignant now*] Statius has here manifested his Belief of one  
 supreme almighty Being, whom he introduces with a Dignity and  
 Superiority suiting his Character and Nature. There is a Noble-  
 ness in this Description, that would not have disgraced *Virgil* him-  
 self; and the stupendous Effects of the *Ned* are finely imagined.  
 But after all, he seems more desirous of making this Deity for-  
 midable than amiable. He is just, but his Justice is not tem-  
 pered with Mercy. We find him the Author of all the Blood shed  
 between the two Nations; he listens to the Imprecations of *Oedipus*  
 and thinking *Mars* too dilatory, sends *Mercury* to him a second Time  
 to rouse him to Battle by Dint of Threats.

302 STATIUS's THEBAID. BOOK VII.

On Clouds and Dews celestial feeds her Beams,  
 And shuns old Ocean's interdicted Streams:  
 And, whether *Mars*, upon his Spear reclin'd, 15  
 Respires from Toil, or wroth with human Kind,  
 Pursues the War near *Hebrus'* freezing Flood,  
 And wantons in a Sea of kindred Blood,  
 To him our Wrath in our own Terms express,  
 Nor, cautious of offending, aught suppress: 20  
 Long since he was enjoin'd by my Commands  
 To range in Arms the *Greek* and *Theban* Bands,  
 And kindle Discord on th' *Inachian* Shore,  
 And where the thund'ring Waves of *Malea* roar.  
 See! fun'ral Rites th' *Argolic* Youth detain 25  
 Just on the Confines of their own Domain.  
 They act like Conquerors, such Shouts arise  
 At Intervals between the Sacrifice.  
 O *Mars*! is this a Sample of thy Rage?  
 See! in far other Contests they engage: 30  
*Oebalian* Gantlets clash, and with a Bound  
 The rising Quoits aloft in Air resound.  
 But, if the cruel Horrors of the Fight  
 Are still his Joy, and give his Soul Delight,  
 Let him, averse to Covenant and Truce, 35  
 With Fire and Sword the guiltless Town reduce  
 To Ruins, slaughter in the Act of Pray'r,  
 Exhaust the World, and lay Creation bare.  
 But now perverse, and heedless of his Sire,  
 He quits the Strife, and moderates his Ire. 40  
 Yet let him speedily our Will obey,  
 And urge the *Grecian* Warriors to the Fray;  
 Else (not to treat him worse) I change his Kind,  
 And break the savage Nature of his Mind:

BOOK VII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 303

His Sword and Coursers else he must restore ; 45  
 And claim the Right of kindred Blood no more,  
*Tritonia* will suffice to the Command,  
 And all besides shall as Spectators stand.  
 He said: the swift-wing'd Herald sallies forth,  
 And to the frozen Climates of the North 50  
 Pursues his Course. Before the polar Gate  
 Storms, Show'rs, and yawning Winds his Coming wait  
 In sable Troops: then down the steepy Way  
 The God, distracted in his Flight, convey.  
 Thick on his Robe the rattling Hail descends, 55  
 And ill the shading Hat his Ears defends.  
 With Horror now he casts his Eyes around,  
 And views, where on a brazen Tract of Ground

v. 57. *With Horror now*] *Lewis Crusius* in his Life of this Author, transcribes this Description of *Mars's* Temple and Palace, as a very fine one: fine however as it is, that in *Dryden's Palamon and Arcite* is not inferior, as the Reader will perceive from a Comparison.

Beneath the low'ring Brow, and on a Bent  
 The Temple stood of *Mars* armipotent:  
 The Frame of burnish'd Steel, that cast a Glare  
 From far, and seem'd to thaw the freezing Air.  
 A strait long Entry to the Temple led,  
 Blind with high Walls and Horror over Head:  
 Thence issu'd such a Blast, and hollow Roar,  
 As threaten'd from the Hinge to heave the Door:  
 In through that Door a northern Light there shone;  
 T'was all it had, for Windows there were none.  
 The Gate was Adamant, eternal Frame!  
 Which hew'd by *Mars* himself, from *Indian Quarries* came,  
 The Labour of a God; and all along  
 Tough Iron-Plates were clench'd to make it strong.  
 A Tun about was ev'ry Pillar there:  
 A polish'd Mirror shone not half so clear.  
 There saw I, how the secret Felon wrought,  
 And Treason lab'ring in the Traitor's Thought;  
 And Midwife Time the ripen'd Plot to Murder brought,

There

Beneath the fronting Height of *Æmus* stood  
The Fane of *Mars*, encompass'd by a Wood.

60

There the red Anger dar'd the pallid Fear;  
Next stood Hypocrisy with holy Leer:  
Soft smiling, and demurely looking down,  
But hid the Dagger underneath the Gown:  
Th' assassinating Wife, the Household Fiend,  
And far the blackest there, the Traytor-Friend.  
On t'other Side there stood Destruction bare;  
Unpunish'd Rapine, and a Waste of War.  
Contest with sharpen'd Knives in Cloisters drawn,  
And all with Blood bespread the holy Lawn.  
Loud Menaces were heard, and foul Disgrace,  
And bawling Infamy in Language base;  
Till Sense was lost in Sound, and Silence fled the Place. }  
The Slayer of himself yet saw I there,  
The Gore, congeal'd, was clotted in his Hair:  
With Eyes half clos'd and gaping Mouth he lay,  
And grim, as when he breath'd his fullen Soul away.  
In Midst of all the Dome, Misfortune sate,  
And gloomy Discontent and fell Debate.  
And Madness laughing in his ireful Mood,  
And arm'd Complaint on Theft, and Cries of Blood.  
There was the murder'd Corpse, in Covert laid,  
And violent Death in thousand Shapes display'd:  
The City to the Soldiers' Rage resign'd:  
Successless Wars, and Poverty behind:  
Ships burnt in Fight, or forc'd on rocky Shores,  
And the rash Hunter strangled by the Boars:  
The new-born Babe by Nurfes overlaid;  
And the Cook caught within the raging Fire he made.  
All Ills of *Mars* his Nature, Flame and Steel,  
The gasping Charioteer beneath the Wheel  
Of his own Car; the ruin'd House that falls,  
And intercepts her Lord betwixt the Walls:  
The whole Division that to *Mars* pertains,  
All Trades of Death that deal in Steel for Gains.  
Were there, the Butcher, Armourer and Smith,  
Who forges sharpen'd Faulchions, or the Scythe.  
The scarlet Conquest on a Tow'r was plac'd,  
With Shouts, and Soldiers Acclamations grac'd:  
A pointed Sword hung threat'ning o'er his Head,  
Sustain'd but by a slender Twine of Thread.  
There saw I *Mars*'s Ides, the Capitol,  
The Seer in vain foretelling *Cæsar*'s Fall;



BOOK VII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 305

The Mansion, rear'd by more than mortal Hands,  
 On Columns fram'd of polish'd Iron stands ;  
 The well-compacted Walls are plated o'er  
 With the same Metal: just without the Door  
 A thousand Furies frown. The dreadful Gleam, 65  
 That issues from the Sides, reflects the Beam  
 Of adverse *Phæbus*, and with chearless Light  
 Saddens the Day, and starry Host of Night.  
 Well his Attendants suit the dreary Place:  
 First frantic Passion, Wrath with redd'ning Face, 70  
 And Mischief blind from forth the Threshold start;  
 Within lurks pallid Fear with quiv'ring Heart,  
 Discord, a two-edg'd Faulchion in her Hand,  
 And Treach'ry striving to conceal the Brand.  
 With endless Menaces the Courts resound: 75  
 Sad Valour in the Midst maintains her Ground,  
 Rage with a joyful Heart, tho' short of Breath,  
 And, arm'd with Steel, the gory-visag'd Death:  
 Blood, spilt in War alone, his Altars crowns,  
 And all his Fire is snatch'd from burning Towns. 80

The last Triumvirs, and the Wars they move,  
 And *Anthony*, who lost the World for love,  
 These and a thousand more the Fane adorn;  
 Their Fates were painted ere the Men were born;  
 All copied from the Heav'ns, and ruling Force  
 Of the red Star, in his revolving Course.  
 The Form of *Mars* high on a Chariot stood,  
 All sheath'd in Arms, and gruffly look'd the God;  
 Two Geomantic Figures were display'd  
 Above his Head, a Warrior and a Maid,  
 One when direct, and one when retrograde.

I hope none of my Readers, but such as are insensible of the fine  
 Traits of Poesy, will be displeased at this long Quotation; as set-  
 ting them together in this Manner is the best Way to shew the  
 Beauties of both Authors; and nothing is more agreeable to Per-  
 sons of Taste, than comparing the Flowers of Genius and Fancy.

Spoils hung around, and gaudy Trophies torn  
 From vanquish'd States the vaulted Roof adorn ;  
 Fragments of Iron-Gates with Art engrav'd,  
 Vessels half-burnt, or by the Billows star'd,  
 Sculls crush'd by Wheels, or by keen Faulchions cleft, 85  
 And Chariots of their Guides and Steeds bereft.  
 Nor were the Wounds of War alone express'd,  
 For Groans were almost seen to heave the Breast.  
 Here grim to View was plac'd the God of Fight,  
 So well-dispos'd, that still he was in Sight 90  
 From ev'ry Path, that to the Center brought :  
 Such was the Work by skilful *Vulcan* wrought,  
 Before, by *Sol* betray'd, th' Adult'rer ru'd  
 His treach'rous Love by vengeful Schemes pursu'd.  
 Scarce had *Cyllenius* cast his Eyes around 95  
 In Search of the fell Dæmon, when the Ground  
 'Gan shake, and *Hebrus*' horned Flood to roar,  
 And yex with reflux Waves the *Thracian* Shore.  
 Then, as a Sign of his Approach, the Steeds  
 Spring from their Stalls, and beat the trembling Meads ;

v. 96. *When the Ground*] What a dreadful Idea of *Mars* does the Poet imprint on the Imagination of the Reader!——To usher him in with the greater Pomp, the Ground trembles, the River roars, and the Gates of his Palace fly open to receive him. He is represented all covered with Blood; his Chariot, driven by *Bel-lona*, overturns Trees, Hills of Snow, and every Thing in its Way; and *Mercury*, a Brother Deity, is so daunted at his Appearance, that his very Blood is chilled, and he does not dare deliver *Jove's* Message; nay, the Poet tells us, that God, great as he is, would have some Reverence for him, and recall the Menaces he uttered.——A Painter might form from this Passage the Portrait of *Mars* in all his Terrors, as successfully as *Phidias* drew that of *Jupiter* from *Homer's* Description of him in the first Book of the *Iliad*.——In short, upon the whole, this Representation is so grand and full, that nothing can exceed it, but that of the same Deity in the third Book of this Author.

The Gates of Adamant, eternal Frame!  
 Flew open. Soon as the Destroyer came,  
 High in his Car, and grac'd with hostile Gore:  
 The Wheels, swift-rolling, dash'd the Meadows o'er  
 With crimson Drops; where'er he pour'd along, 105  
 The Forests and deep Snows give Way.—A Throng  
 Laden with Spoils, succeeds. *Bellona* steers  
 The Chariot's Course, and plies her ashen Spears.  
 All cold and stiff with Terror *Hermes* grew,  
 And turns his Eyes from the terrific View. 110  
 E'en *Jove* himself might soften his Demands,  
 And spare his Threats.—While mute *Cyllenius* stands;  
 The God, preventing his Confusion, cries:  
 What News from *Jove*? what Orders from the Skies?  
 For scarce; unless some Pow'r thy Will controuls,  
 For this bleak Clime beneath the northern Poles  
 Woud'st thou resign the sweet *Lycean* Vales,  
 And *Manalos*, refresh'd by Summer Gales.  
 His Sire's Injunctions known, without Delay  
 Great *Mars* impells along the dreary Way 120  
 His Horses, panting yet with recent Toils,  
 And fires the *Greeks* with Hopes of promis'd Spoils.  
 This seen, the Cloud compeller half resign'd  
 His Wrath, and gentlier now his Face declin'd.

v. 99. *The Steeds*] The seeing of a Horse in a foreign Country before any other Object of the animal Creation was reckoned by the Antients as an Omen of War. *Æneas*, in relating his Adventures to *Dido*, tells her that, in *Italy*

Quatuor hic, primum omen, equos in gramine vidi  
 Tondentes campum latè, candore nivali.

Et pater Anchises, bellum, terra hospita, portas.  
 Bello armantur equi.

Book 3. Verse 5374

Thus, when the weary Blasts of *Eurus* cease, 125  
 And leave the Deeps subdu'd, at first the Peace  
 Is scarce discern'd, as still the Waves retain  
 Their Swell, and heave the Surface of the Main,  
 Whilst, unrefresh'd, the Seamen seek their Oars,  
 And Cordage, floating to the neighb'ring Shores. 130  
 The fun'ral Games, and harmless Contests clos'd,  
*Adrastus* Silence on the Crowd impos'd,  
 And pour'd, to glad the royal Infant's Soul,  
 A large Libation from the sparkling Bowl :  
 Then thus the discontented Shade address'd : 135  
 Grieve not, O Babe, in Heav'n supremely blest.  
 If each third Year these fun'ral Rites shall see,  
 So may not *Pelops* seek with greater Glee  
 Th' *Arcadian* Altars, nor with Iv'ry Hand  
 Insult the Temples on th' *Elean* Strand ; 140  
 So may not *Corinth*, nor the *Delpbic* Coast  
 Superior Fame, and prouder Honours boast.  
 We deem thee more than mortal, and deny  
 That *Styx* confines a Member of the Sky.  
 Here end thy Rites : but shou'd our Vows be crown'd,  
 And haughty *Thebes* lie level with the Ground ;  
 A splendid Fane, and Altars shall be thine,  
 And white-rob'd Priests with holy Pomp inshrine  
 Thy sacred Ashes : nor shall *Greece* alone  
 Through all her Cities make thy Godhead known, 150  
 But *Thebes* to thy Divinity appeal,  
 And swear by thy dread Name with awful Zeal.

v. 138. *So may not Pelops, &c.*] The Sense of this Paraphrase is,  
 ' May neither the *Pythian*, *Olympic* nor *Isthmian*, Games excel those  
 ' instituted in Honour of thee, O Babe.'

Thus spoke the Chief for all his Host. The rest  
 In silent Motions their Assent express'd.  
 Mean Time the God of Battle urg'd his Car 155  
 Down *Ephyra's* Steep Shores, where seen from far  
 The well-known Mount with daring Head invades  
 The Clouds, and either Sea alternate shades.  
 Then Terror, dearest of his menial Train,  
 He sends as Harbinger, nor sends in vain; 160  
 Since none can on our Fear so well impose,  
 And specious Lyes with more Success disclose.  
 His Aspect varies, as the Fiend commands,  
 Unnumber'd are his Tones of Speech, and Hands.  
 Whether th' Existence of two Suns he feigns, 165  
 Or subterraneous Motions of the Plains,  
 Whole Forests shifting Place, and Planets hurl'd  
 From their own Spheres, to gild the nether World,  
 Such is his Talent, that he still deceives,  
 And the gull'd Dotard all alike believes. 170  
 He calls forth all his Art to raise a Cloud  
 Of seeming Dust, and awe the tim'rous Crowd.  
 The Chiefs, astonish'd, from the Mountain's Brow  
 Beheld it mounting o'er the Fields below.  
 To double ev'ry Fear, and spread th' Alarms, 175  
 He mimics thund'ring Steeds, and clashing Arms;

v. 157. *The well-known Mount*] This was a Mountain in the *Pe-  
 loponnesian* Isthmus, called *Acrocorinthus*, i. e. the highest Part of *Co-  
 rinth*. *Ephyra* is an Island adjoining.

v. 159. *Then Terror*] *Mars* is now preparing to obey *Jupiter's*  
 Commands by terrifying the Confederates with a false Account of  
 the *Theban* Army: but all this is told us poetically; and agreeably  
 to the Spirit of the *Epopæia*, *Terror* becomes a Person, and speaks  
 and acts as an Attendant of *Mars*. This allegorical Personification  
 is the strongest Proof of a fertile Imagination, and the very *Zens* any  
 way of heroic Poetry.

Then with delusive Shrieks he grates their Ears,  
 And with false Clamours shakes the solid Spheres.  
 At this with sudden Dread the Vulgar start,  
 A Pulse unusual flutt'ring at their Heart: 180

Terror may mock us with imagin'd Cries :  
 But can it cheat at once our Ears and Eyes ?  
 See what a Dust !——the *Thebans* these ?——his fo.

They come : such is the Boldness of the Poe.  
 But why this Stand ?——we'll first discharge our Vows, 185  
 And close the Rites.——Thus they. The Terror grows,  
 A thousand different Shapes the Monster took,  
 And varied at his Will his Voice and Look.

Now the *Pisaur* Mode of Dress he wears ;  
 And then a Suit of *Pylon* Armour bears : 190

Or in the *Spartan* Phrase, taugntent their Fear,  
 Swears by the Gods, the *Theban* Host is near.

All passes with the Crowd for genuine Truth,

And gains Belief from hoary Age and Youth.

But, when on Whirlwinds borne, the direful Tale 195

He wags around, and brooding o'er the Vale

Thrice shakes his sounding Shield, thrice smites his  
 Steeds,

And lifts the Lance that flamm'd o'er all the Meads,

Arms, Arms they shout, and no Decorum known,

Take up another's Weapons for their own. 200

In borrow'd Coats of Mail, and Casques they shine,

And to their Comrades' Car their Coursers join.

In every Breast Impatience to engage,

And Lust of Slaughter reigns. Nought checks their  
 Rage ;

But on they speed, and fir'd with Thirst of Praise, 205

By present Haste redeem their past Delays.

Such is the Tumult, when indulgent Gales  
 Blow from the Strand, and fill the spreading Sails,  
 Before the Blast the gaudy Vessel flies,  
 The Port rolls back, and lessens to their Eyes. 210  
 Now on the Surface of the Deep their Oars,  
 And Anchors float: while the deserted Shores,  
 And Comrades left behind their Eyes pursue,  
 Till all is lost, and vanish'd from their View.  
 When vine-crown'd Bacchus ey'd the *Græcian* Throng,  
 As, flush'd with martial Heat, they post along,  
 He turn'd his Eyes on *Thebes*, and inly groan'd,  
 For much his native City he bemoan'd.  
 A Look, expressive of his Grief he wore;  
 The purple Chaplets grac'd his Hair no more. 220  
 Th' untasted Clusters from his Horns he shook,  
 And the wreath'd Spear his better Hand forsook.  
 Divested of his Robes, before the Throne  
 Of *Jove*, who press'd by chance the Pole alone,  
 In all the Negligence of Woe he stands, 225  
 And, suppliant, thus bespeaks with lifted Hands

v. 215 *When vine-crown'd Bacchus*] If *Venus* in *Virgil* pleads for the *Trojans*; *Bacchus* here intercedes for his native City, *Thebes*, and *Statius* has given *Jupiter* the same tender Regard for him, as in the *Æneid* he discovers for *Venus*. From *Jupiter's* Answer to *Bacchus* on this Occasion, compared to what he says elsewhere, it appears, that *Jupiter* himself was subject to the Laws of Fate: but, in Reality, these are found to be no other than the fixed and immutable Determinations of his own Will. Here he tells that God, he does not act in Compliance to *Juno's* Caprice, but conformable to the unalterable Order of Destiny. But in the Beginning of the *Thebaid*, we find him positively declaring to the Gods in Council, his Resolution of destroying the royal Families of *Thebes* and *Argos*, as a Punishment for their Crimes: and, perhaps, the Fate of the *Stoics* themselves was no other than this in Reality. Low. *Crucius*.

His gracious Sire, who well the Causes knew,  
 Nor starts astonish'd at th' unwonted View.  
 Say, Father of the Gods, wilt thou destroy  
 Thy *Thebes*? can none but vengeful Schemes employ  
 Thy Consort's Thoughts? and does no Pity move  
 In our Behalf the tender Breast of *Jove*?  
 We grant, that erst it griev'd thee to the Soul  
 To dart thy Light'nings from the cloudy Pole:  
 Yet why dost thou renew thy bitter Ire, 235  
 And threat thy late-lov'd Town with Sword and Fire?  
 No Promises, nor Oaths thy Faith engage.  
 Alas! where wilt thou bound thy causeless Rage?  
 Is this a Proof of thy parental Love?  
 Yet gentler far to the *Parrhasian* Grove, 240  
*Argos* and *Leda's* Dome thou didst repair,  
 For then a Virgin's Conquest was thy Care.  
 Is *Bacchus* then of all thy num'rous Line  
 The last, who merits thy Regard divine?  
*Bacchus*, whom in far happier Days of Yore 245  
 (A pleasing Load) the Cloud-compeller bore,

v. 340 *To the Parrhasian Grove*] *Calisto* was ravished by *Jupiter* in this Grove. *Argos* was the Place, where that God imposed upon *Danaë* in the Form of a Shower of Gold. *Leda* was debauched by the same God in the Similitude of a Swan.

v. 243, *Is Bacchus then*] *Lactantius* informs us, that *Bacchus* complains of his being so often neglected by Mortals, as by *Lycurgus* and *Pentheus*. To corroborate this Assertion, he has cited a long Passage from *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, where *Pentheus* is introduced reviling *Bacchus*. But this is a wrong Construction; and the Sense of

Scilicet è cunctis ego neglectissima natis  
 Progenies.

is, *I then am to be the most slighted of all your Sons, i. e. by you.*

v. 246. (A pleasing Load) the Cloud-compeller] When *Semele* was blasted by the Lightning of her Lover, *Bacchus*, with whom she was



And fondly prov'd a Mother's keenest Throes,  
 To usher into Life, and future Woes.  
 Yet more—The *Thebans* are unskill'd in Arms,  
 Rude and unexercis'd in War's Alarms; 250  
 My martial Discipline alone they know:  
 To weave the leafy Garland for the Brow,  
 And frame their Motions to the Pipe.—Can they  
 Who dread the wreathed Lance, and female Fray,  
 Sustain the Trumpet's Sound?—See furious *Mars*! 255  
 What Feats he meditates, what wasteful Wars!  
 How would'st thou rage, should he to Combat lead  
 And force the *Cretans* to th' embattel'd Mead?  
 A Tool was wanting, 'till entic'd by thee,  
*Argos* must execute thy stern Decree. 260  
 'Tis this Reflexion that augments our Woes,  
 We fall but to enrich our *Argive* Foes.  
 I yield: but whither shall we now translate  
 The Rites mysterious of our ruin'd State?  
 And what the pregnant Mother left behind, 265  
 More happy, had she been less fair and kind?  
 Shall I sue prostrate at the *Thracian's* Feet,  
 Or seek in conquer'd *Ind* a safe Retreat?  
 O grant thy wand'ring Son a peaceful Dome.  
 At the Request of *Sol* no longer roam 270

then pregnant, was taken from her Womb, and sewed up in *Jupiter's* Thigh.

————— geneticis ab alvo  
 Eripitur, patrioque tener (si credere dignum est)  
 Insuitur femori, maternaque tempora complet.

v. 267 *At the Thracian's Feet.*] *Lycurgus*, King of *Thrace*, caused most of the Vines of his Country to be rooted up: hence the Poets have signified, that he fought with, and persecuted *Bacchus*.

v. 270. *At the Request of Sol*] *Venus* upbraids *Jupiter* of his Partiality in like Manner,

The *Delian* Rocks, but girt with Waves, unite,  
Nor envy I the happier God of Light.

*Minerva* from her Citadel below'd

Th' Invasions of the Surge with Ease remov'd.

Great *Epaphus*, (as oft these Eyes have view'd) 275

Gives Laws to *Egypt*, by his Arms subdu'd.

Nor *Cresan-Ida*, nor *Cyllene* care,

What hostile Deeds the neighb'ring States prepare.

Alas ! in what then can our Rites offend ?

Here (since in vain Resistance we pretend) 280

Here didst thou revel in *Alcmene's* Arms,

Here fair *Antiope* resign'd her Charms

With eager Gust, and here *Europa* play'd

The Wanton, by thy specious Form betray'd.

Desert not then the guiltless Race, that springs 285

From thee, the Father of the *Theban* Kings.

At this invidious Speech th' Almighty smil'd,

And, gently raising from the Ground his Child,

As on his Knees he su'd with lifted Hands,

Embrac'd, and kindly answers his Demands. 290

Think not, O *Bacchus*, that the War's design'd

To glut with Slaughter *Juno's* vengeful Mind.

Antenor potuit, mediis elapsus Achivis,  
Illyricos penetrare sinus, atque intima tutus  
Regna Liburnorum, & fontem saperare Timavi;  
Unde per ora novem vasto cum murmure montis, &c.

v. 287. *At this invidious Speech*] *Jupiter's* Behaviour to *Venus* after her addressing him may be compared with this to *Bacchus*.

Olli fabridens hominum fator atque Deorum,  
Vultu, quo cælum tempestatelque serenat,  
Oscula libavit natæ : dehinc talia fatur ;

*Æneid.* 1. 253.

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We act in Concert with the Fates Decree:  
 To fall in Battel was their Destiny.  
 Peace is my sole Delight: who seeks it more, 295  
 Or spills with such Reluctance human Gore?  
 Witness, thou conscious Pole, and starry Hall,  
 How oft, when mortal Crimes for Vengeance call,  
 I lay the ready Bolt aside, how rare  
 My challeng'd Thunders roar, my Lightnings glare. 300  
 Scarce could I to the Wrath of injur'd Mars,  
 And *Dian*, exercis'd in Sylvan Wars,  
 The *Lapithæ*, and *Calydon* resign,  
 Tho' both had long defy'd the Rage divine.  
 Mine is the Loss and Toil to re-indue 305  
 So many Souls with Life, and frame anew.  
 On *Argos* and her Peer in Guilt too late  
 I execute th' impartial Will of Fate.  
 To wave the Sins of *Greece* in ancient Times,  
 Thou know'st, how prone the *Thebans* are to Crimes. 310  
 Thee to,——But since 'twas done in Days of Yore,  
 And we forgive, I pass the Trespas o'er.  
 No Joys incestuous hapless *Pentheus* knew,  
 No Brothers he begot, no Sire he slew;  
 Yet still dismember'd, he resign'd his Breath, 315  
 And met an undeserv'd, untimely Death.

v. 303. *The Lapithæ and Calydon*] See Book the first for an Account of *Diana's* Enmity to the *Calydonians*. The *Lapithæ* were a People of *Theffaly*, inhabiting that Part of the Country that lay between the Mountains *Pindus* and *Othrys*. For an Account of the Combat betwixt them and the Centaurs. See *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Lib. 12.

v. 313. *No Joys incestuous hapless Pentheus knew.*] *Pentheus* was torn in Pieces by the Priestesses of *Bacchus*, for not attending the sacred Rites of that Deity.

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With better Grace thy Sorrow then had flow'd,  
 Nor had thy Eloquence been ill bestow'd.  
 Nor will the *Thebans* suffer Punishment,  
 Tho' well deserv'd, for Crimes that I resent. 320  
 Heav'n, Earth, and Piety expell'd with Scorn,  
 And Nature's sacred Bonds asunder torn,  
 And broken Faith, and e'en the Friends conspire  
 Their Fall.—But thou desist to tempt our Ire,  
 Secure, that a long Interval remains 325.  
 Ere we fulfill on *Thebes*, what Fate ordains.  
 A new Avenger in a better Age  
 Shall rise: first *Argos* bleeds beneath our Rage.  
 This heard, the God his wonted Look resumes,  
 And with fresh Youth, and new-born Graces blooms.  
 Thus parch'd by sultry Suns and southern Gales,  
 The pale Rose fades, and withers in the Vales;  
 But if soft Zephyr fans the glowing Day,  
 And tempers with his Wings the scorching Ray,  
 Its Blush revives, the Buds shine forth again,  
 And waft the Scent thro' *Flora's* fair Domain.  
 Mean while, their March explor'd, the Scout returns;  
 From whom *Eteocles*, astonish'd, learns,  
 That near the Confines of the *Theban* Sway  
 The *Grecian* Hosts advance, and speed their Way, 340

v. 331. *Thus parch'd by sultry Suns*] *Aristo* has a Simile that very much resembles this of our Author.

Qual sotto il più cocente ardore estivo,  
 Quando di ber piu desiosa è l'erba,  
 Il fior, ch' era vicino a restar privo  
 Di tutto quell' umor, ch'in vita il serba,  
 Sente l'amata pioggia, e si fa vivo;

*Orlando furioso*, Canto 23. Stan. 104,

And all, who view the Numbers of the Foe,  
 To vanquish'd *Thebes* portend approaching Woe.  
 Of ev'ry Chief he soon is taught the Name,  
 His Birth, his Quality, and martial Fame,  
 The prudent King dissembles well his Fears, 345  
 And hates the Message, yet attentive hears :  
 His Host he now inspirits and demands  
 A faithful List of all his able Bands.  
 By *Mars* excited to the deathful Field,  
*Aonia*, *Phocis*, and *Eubæa* yield 350  
 Their Youth: for thus the Ruler of the Skies  
 Decreed. Thro' all the Host the Signal flies.  
 Now rang'd for War, and sheath'd in radiant Arms,  
 Forth pour the Squadrons at the first Alarms,  
 And take the Field, which next the City lay, 355  
 Thirsting for Blood, and destin'd for the Fray.  
 Before th' expected Foe was yet in Sight,  
 The Matrons climb the Walls to view the Fight;  
 And teach, whilst to their Sons their Sires they show,  
 Their little Hearts with early Warmth to glow. 360  
 The Senior-Princes on a Turret stood,  
 Veil'd from the public Eye. A sable Hood

v. 361. *The Senior-Princes*] *Statius* has also imitated *Homer* in many Places; and he seems particularly to have had an Eye to *Helen's* informing the old Men on the Walls of *Troy*, as she is there described in the *Iliad*, of the Character of the several Princes in the *Græcian* Camp; for in the seventh Book, *Antigone*, Sister to *Eteocles* and *Polynices* appears standing on a Tower, attended by an old Officer who had been *Laius's* Armour-bearer; who, at her Desire, gives an Account of the Allies that came to assist the *Thebans*. Though some Circumstances are altered, it is very easy to imagine he took his Plan from the *Iliad*. Nor will any one condemn this Conduct of his, such Imitations being not only very allowable, but commendable, when made with Art, and happily and fitly introduced.—

Lewis Crucius.  
 Laßmann

From the keen Air her tender Cheeks defends:  
*Phorbas* alone of all her Train attends,  
 The Squire of *Laius*, whilst at *Thebes* he reign'd, 365  
 And in the royal Service still retain'd.  
 Him fair *Antigone* with kind Demand  
 Thus questions. May we hope to make a Stand  
 Against our Enemies, since all the States  
 Of *Greece* descend to Fight, as Fame relates. 370  
 I pray thee, first inform me of the Name  
 Of our Confed'rates, and what Rank they claim?  
 For well I see what Armour *Creon* wears,  
 What are the Standards our *Menæceus* bears,  
 And how fierce *Hæmon* tow'rs above the rest, 325  
 A brazen Sphinx well-imag'd on his Crest.  
 Thus spake the Fair unknowing. He replies:  
 Yon Chief, whose warlike Figure strikes your Eyes,  
 Is *Dryas*. From *Tanagra's* Hill he leads  
 A thousand Archers, train'd to warlike Deeds. 380  
 The great *Orion's* Offspring he: behold  
 The Bolt and Trident, rudely form'd in Gold  
 Upon his Shield.—Nor do his Acts disgrace  
 Th' untainted Honours of his godlike Race.  
 From him, ye Gods, avert th'invet'rate Ire 385  
 Of stern *Diana*, fatal to his Sire!

*Lactantius* observes, that in this Account of the Generals who took Part with *Thebes*, and the Provinces they commanded, our Author has adhered pretty close to *Homer's* Catalogue, so far as regards the Geography, and Epithets of Places.—Mr. *Pope* strengthens this Remark. See *Iliad*, Lib. 2.

v. 386. *Fatal to his Sire*] The fabulous Account of this Hero is as follows.—*Pelægus*, a pious Worshipper of the Gods hospitably entertained *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, and *Mercury*, for which Favour they they promised to grant him whatsoever he wished. Therefore, as he had no Issue, he requested, that they would grant him a Son. The Gods promised they would; and putting on the Hide of an Ox that he

*Ocalea*, *Medeon*, *Nysa* stock'd with Groves,  
 And *Thisbe*, fam'd for *Cytherea*'s Doves,  
 March to the Fight beneath his royal Care,  
 And to his Banner, unconstrain'd, repair. 390  
 Next comes *Eurymedon*: the Weapons born  
 By *Faun*, his rustic Site, one Hand adorn,  
 A Crest of Pine-leaves trembles on his Head:  
 The savage Race his massy Javelin dread,  
 Nor less is his Desert in Arms, I ween; 395  
 With him *Erythrae*, rich in Flocks, is seen,  
 Who *Scolos*, and the Coasts of *Hyle* till,  
 Who *Eteonos*, rough with many a Hill,  
 And *Schanos*, *Atalanta*'s Birth-place, hold,  
 In Manners haughty, as in Combat bold. 400  
 The Lance of Ash *Pellæan*, and the Shield,  
 Impenetrable by the Dart they wield.  
 See, with what Clamours the *Neptunian* Throng,  
 The Natives of *Oncbestus*, pour along!

he had just sacrificed to them, ordered him to dig a Hole for it in the Earth, and take it out at the End of nine Months. He did so, and found on it the Child, whom he afterwards named *Orion*, from *Oupor*, which signifies *Urine*. When *Orion* grew up to Man's Estate, he attempted to ravish *Diana*, who, imploring the Assistance of the Earth, was delivered by a Scorpion, that stung the Ravisher to Death. Others say, that he was slain by the Shafts of that Goddess, as *Horace*.

Virginæâ domitus sagittâ.

v. 399. *Atalanta's Birth-place*] There were two Ladies of this Name; one an *Arcadian* Queen, the Mother of *Parthenopæus*, and the other (who is here meant) of *Sicyos*. She was overcome in a Foot-Race by *Hippomachus*, who threw in her Way three golden Apples, which *Venus* had given him for that Purpose.

v. 401. *The Lance of Ash Pellæan*] *Lucan* mentions this Sort of Weapon, and particularises it, as well as our Author, by the Name of *Sarissa*.

Primi Pellæas arcu fregere Sarissas.

Digitized by Google  
 Whom

Whom *Mycaliffas* shades with lofty Pines, 405  
 Where, as a Mirror clear, *Gargaphye* shines,  
 Thy Streams, O *Melus*, lov'd of *Pallas*, rise,  
 And *Heliartus* views with envying Eyes  
 The Fruit of *Ceres*, and, as it ascends,  
 With the young Blades his noxious Herbage blends. 410  
 Their Shields are Bark. Huge Trunks supply the Place  
 Of Spears. A Lion's Hide o'erspreads their Face.  
 These, as they want a Monarch of their own,  
*Amphion* (by the Damsel not unknown)  
 Conducts to War. The Badges of the Realm, 415  
 A Bull and Lyre are wrought upon his Helm.  
 Proceed, brave Youth, to dare the thickest Foes,  
 And for our Walls thy naked Breast expose.  
 You too, ye Warriors, favour'd of the Nine!  
 To yield us Aid forsake the Mount divine. 420  
 And thou, O *Olmius*, and *Permessus* blest  
 With Streams, whose gentle Murmurs lull to rest  
 The weary Shepherd, rouse to Feats of Arms  
 Your slothful Sons, averse to War's Alarms.

414. *By the Damsel not unknown.*] I think it is not improper to take Notice, that this Parenthesis is not to be understood as spoken by *Phorbas* to *Antigone*, but by the Author to the Reader. He hints to him, that *Phorbas* is describing a Person to *Antigone*, whom she very well knew; so that we may fairly conclude, there was some Love-Match in the Case, to which the Poet alludes in this slight Manner.

v. 415. *The Badges of the Realm, a Bull and Lyre*] The Lyre was engraved on the Arms of the *Thebans*, because *Amphion* is said to have built their Town by his Skill in handling that Instrument; and the Bull was added in Honour of *Cadmus*, who, when he sought his Sister *Europa*, who was ravished by *Jupiter* in the Shape of that Animal, was conducted by an Heifer to the Spot, where he afterwards founded the City of *Thebes*.

In



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In Strains adapted to their Country's Rite 425  
 They now exult, and harmonize the Fight.  
 Thus, when in Spring *Sol* sheds a warmer Ray,  
 On *Strymon's* Banks the Swans renew their Lay.  
 Pursue with Chearfulness this Track to Fame,  
 Secure, the Muses shall embalm your Name 430  
 In never-dying Numbers, and convey  
 To latest Times the Honours of the Fray.  
 The Princess here broke in, and thus replies.  
 O Father, hither turn thy aged Eyes,  
 For sure this Parity of Choice declares 435  
 That those are Brothers.—Mark, how either wears  
 The self-same Armour! equal are their Crests:  
 But say, what Motive thus cements their Breasts.  
 Were ours as these unanimous and kind!  
 She ceas'd. The Sage soft smiling, thus rejoin'd. 440  
 Nor thou, O Queen, hast err'd in this alone:  
 Many (the real History unknown)  
 That these are Brethren, have alike believ'd,  
 By all the Signs of equal Age deceiv'd.  
 Yet are they Sire and Son, tho' each appears 445  
 A Brother both in Stature, Form and Years.  
 Fair *Dircetis*, enamour'd with the Charms  
 Of *Lapithæon*, snatch'd him to her Arms;

v. 441. *Nor thou, O Queen*] It has been observed of *Statius*, that in his Catalogues he has happily imitated *Homer* and *Virgil*, by keeping up the Dignity of his Style, and Harmony of his Numbers, and diversifying the Detail with proper Epithets, short Descriptions, and agreeable Narrations from Passages of History and Fable, with which he diverts and refreshes the Reader at due Intervals. Of his Art in this last Article the following Anecdote is a shining Instance; and though it borders upon the marvellous, does not transgress the Licence of Poetry.

And, forcing Nature, taught the Boy to prove  
Th' untimely Joys of undigested Love. 450

Nor was it long, before from their Embrace  
*Alaibrens* sprung unmatch'd in Shape and Face.

He deigning not to wait the nat'ral Time,  
O'ertakes his Father in his youthful Prime,  
Adopts each Feature, blends their Years in one: 455

And now they change the Name of Sire and Son  
For that of Brothers, and unknowing Strife,  
Tread Hand in Hand, the chequer'd Path of Life.

With each three hundred Horse to Fight repair,  
Who breathe fam'd *Coronia's* temp'rate Air, 460

And *Gliffas'*, sacred to the Pow'rs divine,  
One for her Corn renown'd, and one for Wine.

Mark *Hypsæus*, whose enormous Shield display'd  
O'er four tall Steeds extends its ample Shade !  
Huge is its Orb, with sev'n Bull-Hides o'ercastr: 465

The Cuirass, for its Strength by few surpass'd,  
Three Plates of Iron form. His gen'rous Breast  
Alone it guards: he fears not for the rest.

His Spear the Glory of the sylvan Reign,  
Ne'er baulks its Master's Hopes, nor flies in vain: 470

Thro' obvious Arms and Hearts it takes its Way,  
Untaught to brook Resistance and Delay.

*Asopus* was his Sire (to credit Fame)  
A Father then, and worthy of the Name,  
When thro' the broken Bridge and ruin'd Mound 475  
He roars, and deluges the Plains around,

v. 468. *He fears not for the rest*] *Phorbas* here pays a genteel and artful Compliment to the Valour of *Hypsæus*. He tells *Antigone*, that he had no Occasion for any Armour on his Back, because he never turned it to his Enemies.

Or when, to brave the Ruler of the Skies,  
 In Days of old he bade his Waves arise.  
 For they report, that whilst his Daughter stray'd  
 On the green, Bank he forc'd the beauteous Maid, 480  
 Resenting this (for at that better Time  
 The Rape of Virgins was no licens'd Crime)  
 With *Jove* he durst in hardy Fight engage,  
 And dash'd against the Stars his foamy Rage:  
 At length, unequal to the triple Fire, 485  
 He sunk from Combat, and resign'd his Ire.  
 Yet some small Sparks of Courage still remain;  
 For oft in angry Mood upon the Plain  
 He pours *Ætnean* Vapours, Badge of Shame,  
 And Ashes, gather'd from the Light'ning's Flame. 490  
 The Deeds of *Hypseus* we shall soon approve,  
 If his fair Sister can but influence *Jove*.  
 Him as their Chief, *Ithone's* Troops attend  
*Ithone*, bless'd with *Pallas* for a Friend.]  
 From *Arne*, *Graea*, *Mide* and the Coast 495  
 Of *Aulis*, next he leads a banded Host,  
 With those who exercise their rural Toil  
 On green *Platea*, *Peteon's* furrowy Soil,  
*Euripus*, ebbing in his Course again,  
 And thee, *Anthedon*, Verge of our Domain, 500

v. 496. *Aulis*] A City and Haven of *Boeotia*, where the *Grecians* were detained a long Time by contrary Winds in their Expedition against *Troy*.

v. 499. *Euripus*.] A narrow Sea between *Boeotia* and *Eubœa*, where, according to *Gregory Nazianzen* and *Justin Martyr*, *Aristotle* drowned himself, because he could not discover the Cause of its ebbing and flowing, which was seven Times a Day.

v. 500. *Anthedon*] A Town situated between *Eubœa* and *Boeotia*. *Glaucus* was a Fisherman, who laying the Fish which he caught, upon the Bank, observed, that by tasting a certain Herb they revived, and

Where *Glaucus*, leaping from the grassy Shore,  
 Plung'd headlong in the Deeps, a Man no more,  
 And view'd with sudden Terror, as he sprung,  
 The Fishes, that around his Middle clung.  
 With *Balearic* Slings they cleave the Wind : 505  
 Their Javelins leave the swiftest Shaft behind.  
 Nor had *Narcissus* shun'd the Strife of Arms :  
 But smitten with his own reflected Charms  
 In *Thebſian* Fields he grows. *Cephiſſus* laves  
 The much-lov'd Flow'ret with his childleſs Waves. 510  
 Who can recount the *Pbocians* fam'd of old,  
 The *Pbocians*, in *Apollo's* Hoſt inroll'd ?  
 Who *Panope* and *Cypariſſos* plow,  
 Or *Lebodea's* Vales, and *Daulis* ſow ?  
*Hyampolis*, on pointed Rocks reclin'd, 515  
 And high *Parnaffus*, at the Top diſjoin'd ?  
 Who thro' the Plains of *Anemoria* rove,  
 Thro' *Cyrrba*, and the dark *Corycian* Grove ;  
 And from *Lilea's* ſea-beat Walls, diſpread  
 With oozy Banks, behold the Fountain-Head 520  
 Of hoar *Cephiſſus*, where the *Pythian* Snake  
 In the freſh Stream was wont his Thirſt to ſlake.

leaped into the Sea again, which he imitated, and became a God of the Sea.

v. 509. *Cephiſſus*] At preſent, *Cefſſo* is a River of Greece that diſembogues itſelf into the Gulph of *Negropont*. It riſes in the Mountains of *Pbocis*, and is ſtil'd ſacred by *Lucan*, from the Nearneſs of its Springs to the Oracle of *Delphos*. This River was feigned to be the Father of *Narciffus*, whoſe Story is in every School-boy's Mouth, and therefore needs not to be told here.

v. 513. *Who Panope, &c.*] Theſe Lines are almoſt a Transcript of thoſe ſubjoined from *Homer's* Catalogue. *Il. B. 2.*

Οἱ Κεπάρμοστος ἔχον, Πυθωνίᾳ τε πτερύσσας,  
 Κεῖσας τε Ζαδῆην, καὶ Δαυλίδᾳ καὶ Παιονίᾳ,  
 Φιτ' Ἀνιμάρειαν, καὶ Ἰαμυπλὴν ἀμφειμμένην.

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Laurels, inwoven with their Crests, they wear,  
 And on their brazen Arms insculptur'd bear  
*Delos*, or *Niobe's* or *Tytion's* Fate, 525  
 Both sacrific'd to stern *Latonia's* Hate.  
 These *Iphitus*, a Chief well-known to Fame,  
 Commands, whose Father, *Naubolus* by Name,  
 Directed once the Car and Warrior-Steeds  
 Of *Laius*, noted for his gentle Deeds, 530  
 What Time (O Scene Heart-wounding to behold!  
 His Neck, convuls'd with dying Motions roll'd,  
 And pour'd upon the Ground Life's purple Tide.  
 O had I shar'd his Fate, and with him dy'd!  
 While thus he spoke, his Cheeks grew wet with Tears,  
 And his whole Visage pale and wan appears; 535  
 Whilst interrupting Sighs his Voice repress,  
 And heav'd, as they wou'd rend his swelling Breast.  
 With lenient Arts his Ward removes his Pain :  
 His Voice restor'd, he faintly speaks again. 540  
 O thou, who dost my ev'ry Thought employ,  
 At once a pleasing Care, and anxious Joy !  
 For thee I linger on Life's busy Stage,  
 And drag along the slow Remains of Age,  
 Too see perchance thy princely Brothers slain, 545  
 And *Laius'* Slaughter acted o'er again.  
 Yet till to some brave Suitor I resign  
 Thy Virgin-Charms, protract, ye Pow'rs divine,  
 My vital Thread : that Charge fulfill'd, I give  
 The Loan of Nature back, and cease to live. 550

v. 555. *Carystos*] Now *Carysto*, an Island bordering on the Straits of *Eubœa*.——*Caphareus* was the Mountain on which many of the Grecian Ships were split in their Return from *Troy*.

But whilst we thus digress the Time away,  
 What Leaders pass, unnotic'd, to the Fray !  
 See *Clonius* with the Seed of *Abas* join'd,  
 Whose Hair depends in flowing Locks behind !  
 Unfung *Carystos*, stock'd with marble Veins, 555  
*Capbareus* high, and *Aeges*'s Vale remains.  
 And now the circling Troops their Chief enclose,  
 While Heralds Silence on the Crowd impose.  
 Scarce had he said, when from a rising Ground,  
 The Monarch thus bespeaks his Bands around. 560  
 Ye Warrior-Kings, from whose disposing Hand  
 I take the Honours of the chief Command,  
 Or midst the vulgar Herd assert my Right,  
 Think not, I now exhort you to the Fight,  
 Since bound by voluntary Oaths, you lend 565  
 Your pow'rful Aid ; nor mean I to commend,  
 Since Words can ill express my grateful Sense,  
 Nor Thanks requite your Zeal in our Defence.  
 Yet shall the Gods your high Desert regard,  
 And your own Hands the Victory reward, 570  
 No Foe leads hither his assembled Hosts,  
 No warlike Pillager from foreign Coasts

v. 561. *Ye Warrior-Kings*] It will be hard to find a more artful Speech than this of *Eteocles* to the auxiliary Kings. He begins with telling them, that he is willing to resign the Command of the Army whenever they require it. He then pays them a genteel Compliment on their Readiness to assist him; and sets this Expedition of his Brother in the worst of Lights by attributing it to the Thirst of Blood, Disaffection to his Parents, and an unnatural Aversion to his native Country.—In short, it is the compleatest Piece of Dissimulation I ever met with. Not the least of his malevolent Disposition transpires, and no one from this Harangue could form an Idea of his true Character.

Prepares to sack the Town which you defend,  
 But a false Native, and pretended Friend.  
 Here are his Sisters, Mother, aged Sire, 575  
 And here his Brother was.—See, flush'd with Ire,  
 His Countrymen in adverse Arms he meets,  
 And menaces his own paternal Seats.  
 Yet in my Cause th' *Aonian* Troops engage,  
 Nor leave me, Monster! to thy ruthless Rage. 580  
 Whose Will and Sentiments thou should'st have known,  
 Nor thus aspir'd to my forbidden Crown.  
 This said, the King disposes all aright,  
 And orders, who shall take the Field for Fight,  
 Or guard the City: who shall close the Rear, 585  
 Compose the Flanks, or in the Van appear.  
 The Shepherd thus unbars at Break of Day  
 His Twig-built Folds, and calls the Sheep away.  
 The Fathers of the Flock in Order lead  
 The dewy Way, the Mother-Ewes succeed. 590  
 With careful Hand he tends the teeming Dams,  
 And carries in his Arms the feeble Lambs.  
 Mean Time, with Wrath impell'd, the *Grecian* Host  
 Pursue their March along th' *Aonian* Coast;  
 From Morn to Night, from Night to Morn again 595  
 They bend beneath their Armour, and disdain  
 The Gifts of Sleep, and grudge to set apart  
 An Hour for Rest, or Food to cheer the Heart.

v. 587. *The Shepherd thus*] This Simile, though taken from low Life, admirably well illustrates the parental Care and military Vigilance of *Etneles*: and with Respect to the Circumstances of it, *Virgil* himself has scarcely in all his Eclogues a finer Piece of rural Imagery.

They seek their Enemies with equal Speed,  
 As if pursu'd themselves by Foes ; nor heed 600  
 The Prodigies, that, as they pass along,  
 Foretell their Fate in many a boding Song.  
 The Stars, the Beasts and Birds of Prey disclose  
 Destruction ; o'er their Banks the Rivers rose :  
 Malignant Lightnings glanc'd along the Poles, 605  
 And *Jove's* own Hand portentous Thunders rolls.  
 Spontaneous close the holy Temple-Doors,  
 The Shrine with more than mortal Voices roars ;  
 Alternate Show'rs of Blood and Stones descend,  
 And kindred Shades in weeping Throngs attend. 610  
 Then *Cyrrha's* Oracles respond no more,  
*Eleusis* howls in Months unknown before,  
 While in their op'ning Fanes (a sure Presage  
 Of future Ills) the *Spartan* Twins engage.  
 At Depth of Night (for so th' *Arcadians* tell) 615  
*Lycaon's* frantic Ghost was heard to yell.  
*Oenomaus* renews the Race again,  
 And guides the Car o'er *Pisa's* cruel Plain,  
 Whilst *Achelous* weeps his other Horn  
 From his dishonour'd Head unjustly torn 620  
*Mycenæ's* iv'ry *Juno* stands in Tears,  
 And *Perseus'* Statue vents in Groans its Fears ;  
 Old *Inachus* rebellows hoarse and loud,  
 And with his Roarings scares the rustic Crowd :

v, 603. *The Stars, &c.*] The Prognostics of the civil Broils between *Cæsar* and *Pompey* are many of them parallel with those preceding the *Theban* War. See *Lucan's Pharsalia*, Book 1 and 7.

v. 616. *Lycaon's*] *Lycaon* was the Father of *Helice*, who was floured by *Jupiter*. To revenge the Rape, he served up human Flesh to the Gods at a Banquet, and was therefore turned into an Wolf. See *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Lib. 1.



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While sad *Palemon* o'er the double Main 625  
 Was notic'd for his Country to complain.  
 Th' *Inachians* heard, yet on their Course they steer,  
 To heav'nly Counsels deaf, and blind to Fear.  
 Now on the Banks of rough *Asopus* stood  
 The *Grecian* Wings, and view'd the hostile Flood, 630  
 When sudden Doubts forbade them to pass o'er,  
 And stay'd their slack'ning Steps upon the Shore.  
 The River then by chance with deafning Sound  
 Descended on the trembling Fields around;  
 Whether he ow'd his Swell to Mountain-Snow, 635  
 Or Show'rs, discharg'd from the celestial Bow,  
 Or whether, to detain his daring Foes  
 From sacking *Thebes*, spontaneous he arose.  
*Hippomedon* first plunges in his Steed,  
 Huge Fragments of the broken Bank succeed: 640  
 Then to his Comrades left behind he cries,  
 While, bursting o'er his Head, the Waves arise:  
 Come on, for thus to *Thebes* I'll shew the Way,  
 Nor Walls, nor Gates shall long my Progress stay.

v. 631. *When sudden Doubts*] *Cæsar's* Irresolution and Dread at passing the *Rubicon* are described in a similar Manner by *Lucan*, and the following Lines in particular have a near Resemblance with our Author's.

— Ut ventum est parvi Rubiconis an undas,  
 ————— Tunc perculit honor  
 Membra ducis, riguerè comæ, gressumque coercens  
 Languor in extrema tenuit vestigia ripæ.

v. 633. *The River then*] *Statius* might have here introduced a fine Piece of Machinery, and taken the same Advantage of the River *Asopus*, as *Homer* did of *Scamander*, by making it oppose the March of the *Grecians*.—But perhaps it was his Aversion to become an Imitator that made him let slip this Opportunity; he rather choosing to forego an Ornament than be indebted to another for the Hint of it.

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Now all rush down, dismiss their former Dread, 645  
And blush to follow when they might have led.

Thus when the Herdsman thro' some Brook untry'd  
Would drive his Cattle to the farther Side,  
Just on the Brink all motionless they stand,  
And view the Waves between, and distant Strand: 650

But if the bolder Bull pervades the Ford,  
And gains the wish'd-for Mead, its Depth explor'd,  
The Leap grows easy, shallower looks the Stream,  
And the two Banks almost united seem.

Not distant far a Mountain they survey, . 655  
And Fields, from whence all *Thebes* in Prospect lay:  
Encamping here, they rais'd their Tents and eas'd  
Their Limbs, so well the Situation pleas'd.

Beneath an open Tract of Country lies ;  
No Hills between the Town and them arise, 660  
From whose superior Height the curious Foe  
Might mark the Motions in their Camp below.

So well had Nature form'd it's ev'ry Part,  
That nought remains improveable by Art.

Here Rocks in Form of lofty Bulwarks rose, 665  
There hollow Vales a Kind of Trench compose,  
A Battlement, self-rais'd, defends each Side.

What more was wanted, their own Hands supply'd,  
Till *Sol* retir'd beneath *Hesperian* Seas,  
And Sleep impos'd an Interval of Ease. 670

But O what Tongue can speak the wild Affright  
Of *Thebes*, when veil'd in Gloom the sleepless Night  
Doubles each Terror of the future Pray,

And menaces the near Approach of Day.  
They run about the Walls ; and in their Fears 675  
*Amphion*'s Fortress insecure appears.

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Mean while new Horrors of the Foe arise,  
 Fame swells their Number, Fear augments their Size.  
 But when they view the blazing Fires, that show  
 The *Grecian* Tents, from off the Mountain's Brow, 680  
 Their Warrior-Steeds, and Weapons some exhort,  
 Others more pious to the Fanes resort,  
 And tempt the Gods with Sacrifice and Pray'r;  
 Or in the very Height of their Despair,  
 Exact a Promise of the burial Rite, 685  
 And fun'ral Honours, if they fall in Fight.  
 Terrific Visions bring to View their Foes,  
 And deathful Dreams intrude on their Repose.  
 To lose the Life that's loathsome grown, they fear,  
 And call for Death, but shun it when 'tis near. 690  
 In either Camp the Fury takes her Stand,  
 And brandishes a Snake in either Hand:  
 The \* Chiefs with mutual Hatred she inspires;  
 But both against their aged Parent fires:  
 Sequester'd in a distant Cell he lies, 695  
 Implores the Fiends, and re-demands his Eyes,  
 Now fainter shone the silver Lamp of Night,  
 And the Stars fled before the new-born Light,  
 When *Sol*, emerging from his watry Bed,  
 Above the Waves exalts his beaming Head, 700

v. 679. *Fame swells their Number*] *Lucan* has some animated Lines  
 on the Terrors that *Cæsar's* Approach caused at *Rome*. *Pbar. B. i.*

Barbaricas sævi discurrere Cæsaris alas :  
 Ipsam omnes aquilas, collataque signa ferentem,  
 Agmine non uno, densisque incedere castris.  
 Nec qualem meminere vident : majorque ferusque  
 Mentibus occurrit, victoque immanior hoste.

\* *Ætœoles* and *Polynices*.

And, scatt'ring from his Wheels the Sparks of Day,  
 Marks his bright Progress with a golden Ray.  
 Lo! from the Gate her Steps *Jocasta* bends,  
 And looks the oldest of the Sister Fiends  
 In Majesty of Woe. Her Colour flies ; 705  
 Grey hairs o'erhung her Cheeks and haggard Eyes.  
 Black were her Arms : an Olive-Branch she bore;  
 With Wool of sable Colour wreathed o'er.  
 Her Daughters, now the better Sex, sustain  
 The furious Queen, while she exerts in vain 710  
 Her aged Limbs, that, destitute of Force,  
 Bend with her Weight, and falter in the Course.  
 She stands before the *Grecians*, strikes her Breasts  
 Against the Gates, and movingly requests  
 Access in Terms like these.—Ye hostile Bands, 715  
 The guilty Mother of the War demands  
 To see her Son, long absent from her Sight,  
 Nor asks it as a Favour, but her Right.  
 The Troops astounded, tremble at the View,  
 But when she spoke, their Fears increase anew. 720  
 The King's Consent obtain'd, without Delay  
 Through yielding Foes, secure, she takes her Way,  
 And, as she first th' *Inachian* Leaders eyes,  
 Vents her outrageous Grief in horrid Cries.  
 Ye Chiefs of *Argos*, to my Eyes disclose 725  
 The worst of Children and the worst of Foes ;  
 O say, beneath what Helm his Visage lies  
 Conceal'd, what Arms his well-known Shape disguise.

v. 703. *Lo! from the Gate*] I cannot but fancy, there is a strong  
 Resemblance between the Portraits of *Amata* and *Jocasta*: though  
 the former endeavours to sow the Seeds of War, and the latter to  
 make Peace. The Description of the Interview between the Mo-  
 ther and Son is wrought up to the utmost Height of the Pathos.

While thus she spake, the summon'd Prince appears ;  
Forth bubble from his Eyes the joyful Tears. 730

He clasps her in his Arms, and aw'd with Shame,  
Relieves her Pains, and dwells upon her Name.

His Sisters now, his Mother then he tends,  
Who thus with Pity just Reproaches blends.

O Partner of *Mycenæ's* fair Domain ! 735

Why dost thou Tears, and Names respectful feign.

And strain thy odious Mother to thy Breast,

Her tender Bosom by thy Armour press'd ?

Didst thou a wretched Guest and Outlaw rove ?

What Heart's so steely that thou wou'dst not move ? 740

The Troops from far expect thy last Commands,

And many a glitt'ring Sword beside thee stands.

v. 735. *O Partner of Mycenæ's*] This Speech of *Jocasta* breathes very strong of motherly Tenderness and Affection.—She opens it with declaring her Doubts of her Son's Sincerity, then tells him, the Troops are so much at his Command, that they will easily dismiss their Rage, if they know his Inclinations are for Peace. She next reminds him of her Care and Regard for him, and advises him to try his Brother once more, adding at the same Time, that if he persists in withholding the Crown from him, he will then have a good Pretence for commencing Hostilities. She then obviates any Suspensions he might entertain of her Treachery, and ironically prompts him to make him and her Daughters Prisoners. She concludes with an Apostrophe to the *Grecian* Princes, wherein she intreats them to make Peace, and use their Influence with her Son, to reconcile him to his Friends, by telling them what Anxieties their Relations undergo in their Absence.—It is impossible to point out the Beauties of these long Orations, without analysing them in this Manner, and considering their several Objects and Motives separately.

v. 740. *What Heart's so steely, that thou wou'dst not move*] *Jocasta* speaks here interrogatively :—The Sense is, there is no one, but what is either moved with Terror at the approaching Invasion, or with Compassion of your Misfortunes.

Alas! the Cares that hapless Mothers prove!  
 Witness, how oft I've wept, ye Pow'rs above.  
 Yet if thou wilt the Words of Age revere, 745  
 And to thy Friends' Advice incline thy Ear,  
 Now, while the Camp is still, as in the Night,  
 And Piety suspends the dreadful Fight,  
 I pray thee, as a King of mighty Sway,  
 But charge thee, as my Son, to speed thy Way 750  
 To *Thebes*, and see again thy native Hall,  
 Before to *Vulcan's* Rage a Prey it fall.  
 Once more address thy Brother in my Sight,  
 And I'll be Judge to ascertain thy Right:  
 Should he refuse again, he will afford 755  
 A better Plea to wield again the Sword.  
 Deem not, that by thy conscious Mother's Aid,  
 Perfidious Snarcs are for thy Ruin laid.  
 Some Sparks of nat'ral Love we still retain;  
 Such Fears, thy Sire conducting, would be vain. 760  
 'Tis true, I married, and from our Embrace  
 You sprung, the lasting Badges of Disgrace:  
 Yet vicious as you are, you share my Love:  
 I pardon, what I yet must disapprove.  
 But, if thou dost persist to play the King, 765  
 A Triumph ready to thy Hands we bring.  
 Come, tie thy captive Sisters' Hands behind,  
 And to the Car thy fetter'd Parents bind.  
 Now to your Shame, O *Greeks*, my Groans I turn,  
 For your old Sires, and Babes your Absence mourn.  
 Such then (believe me) is the secret Dread, 771  
 That Parents feel, such Tears at home they shed.  
 If in so short a Time so dear he's grown  
 To you, by whom his Merits scarce were known,

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What anxious Thoughts must these my Breasts engage,  
These Breasts, the Solace of his tender Age? 776

From *Thracian* Kings such Usage I might bear,  
But not from those, who breathe the *Grecian* Air.

Then grant my Wish, and second my Desire,  
Or in my Son's Embraces I expire. 780

These pow'rful Words the wrathful Cohorts move,  
And all the Mother's virtuous Suit approve :

Whilst on their glitt'ring Shields and Armour flow  
The pious Streams of sympathetic Woe.

As when the brindled Monarch of the Wood 785  
Beholds the Hunter prostrate and subdu'd,

His Anger past, he takes a greater Joy  
To spare the ready Victim, than destroy.

Thus Pity through their Hearts unnotic'd, glides,  
And the fell Ardour of Revenge subsides. 790

Before them all the Warrior turns his Face  
To meet his loving Mother's kind Embrace,

And tries to yield *Antigone* Relief,  
And chace with Kisses fair *Ismene's* Grief :

While, various Tempests raging in his Mind, 795  
Ambition for a Time the Reins resign'd.

He wills to go. *Adrastus* not denies ;

When, mindful of past Inj'ries, *Tydeus* cries,  
Rather let me address the gen'rous Foe,

Who his experienc'd Faith and Honour know, 800  
Though not a Brother.—In this wounded Breast  
I bear his Peace and Covenants impress'd.

v. 801. *Though not a Brother*] Nothing could be more aptly contrived to render *Eteocles* odious to his Brother, and consequently to dissuade him from trusting himself in his Hands, than this Reflection. —He observes to *Polynices*, that, though he was so mal-treated by *Eteocles*, he was not his Brother ; which is equivalent to saying; that he, who was his Brother, would be used with a much greater Degree of Rigour and Cruelty. Why

Why did'st thou not, O gentle Mother-Queen !  
 As Judge and Mediatress stand between,  
 When the fee'd Guards in nightly Ambush lay ? 805  
 Such is the League by which thou wou'dst betray  
 Thy Son.—But lead him to yon reeking Mead,  
 That still bears Witness to the bloody Deed.  
 Yet wilt thou follow ?—Do not thus neglect  
 Our friendly Counsels through a false Respect. 810  
 Say, when the hostile Weapons round thee glare,  
 Will she, lamenting, make thy Life her Care,  
 And turn each Dagger's menac'd Point away ;  
 Or will the Tyrant King forego his Prey,  
 And send thee to our Camp unhurt again ? 815  
 First *Inachus* shall cease to seek the Main,  
 And *Achelus* run back, while in my View  
 This Lance its verdant Honours shall renew.  
 Beneath this friendly Converse lurks a Sword :  
 Know, that our Gates too will Access afford : 820  
 In us, unperjur'd yet, he may confide ;  
 Yet, should he me suspect, I step aside.  
 Then let him come, while privy to the Scene,  
 His Mother and his Sisters stand between.  
 But, shou'd he the contested Crown restore, 825  
 Wilt thou resign, thy Term of ruling o'er ?  
 This heard, their first Resolves the Warriors change,  
 And for the Fight again themselves arrange.

v. 817. *While in my View*] The Hint of this Passage is taken from *Valerius Flaccus*, *Argonautics*, Book 3.

Hanc ego magnanimi spoliū Didymachis hastam,  
 Ut semel est avulsa jugis, a matre peremptā,  
 Quæ neque jam frondes virides neque proferet umbras,  
 Fida ministeria, et duras obit horrida pagnas,  
 Testor.



- Thus the fierce South by sudden Whirlwinds gains  
 The wide-stretch'd Empire of the liquid Plains 830  
 From *Boreas*.—Peace and Leagues they seek no more,  
 But give a Loose to Rage, and thirst for Gore.  
*Erinnyes* takes Advantage of th' Alarms,  
 And sows the Seeds of War and future Harms.  
 Two Tigers mild and innocent of Blood, 835  
 Pursu'd their Way to *Dirce's* sacred Flood.  
 By *Bacchus* for the Chariot they were broke,  
 And, with their Country, bow'd beneath the Yoke;  
 Now old and useless in his Service grown,  
 They graze the Fields beside the *Theban* Town, 840  
 Gentle as Lambs, and smelling as they pass,  
 Of *Indian* Herbage, and *Sabeian* Grass.  
 The *Bacchanalian* Crowd, and elder Priest,  
 At each Renewal of their Patron's Feast,

v. 835. *Two Tigers mild and innocent of Blood*] *Lewis Cruci*us, in his Account of our Author, observes, that, it being more artful to let the War break out from a trivial Occasion, *Statius* has in this Passage imitated *Virgil*, who informs us, the War between *Aeneas* and *Turnus* was caused by the killing of a favourite Stag.—I readily grant with this ingenious Gentleman, that this is an Imitation of *Virgil*, but cannot think the Death of the two Tigers a trifling Occasion of the War. There is certainly a wide Difference between the killing a Deer, the Property of a Country Girl, and two Tigers consecrated to *Bacchus*, the tutelary God and Patron of the *Thebans*: and whoever considers what superstitious Bigots they were, at that Time of Day, will easily imagine, that there could not be a greater Reason for the *Thebans* going to War, than such an Insult on their Gods, and such an Affront to their Religion.—In describing the Caresses and Ornaments which were bestowed on them, he has taken some of the Circumstances from *Virgil*.

Affuetum imperiis soror omni Sylvia curâ  
 Mollibus intexens ornabat cornua fertis,  
 Pestebatque serum, puroque in fonte lavabat  
 Ille manum patiens, affuetus mensæque herili,  
 Errabat sylvis; rursusque ad limina nota  
 Ipse domum serâ quamvis se nocte ferebat.

V. 486.

Their sable Spots with purple Fillets blend, 845  
 While various Clusters from their Necks depend.  
 By Flocks and Herds they were alike belov'd,  
 Secure with them the lowing Heifers rov'd.  
 On nought they prey, but from each friendly Hand  
 Their daily Food in placid Guise demand, 850  
 And to the Ground their horrid Mouths incline,  
 To lap the purple Produce of the Vine.  
 Around the Country all the Day they roam,  
 But when at Noon they seek their wonted Home,  
 With sacred Fires the Domes and Temples shine, 855  
 As if to grace the present God of Wine.  
 But when her sounding Lash the Fury shakes,  
 Her sounding Lash, compos'd of twisted Snakes,  
 Their former Rage returning, from the Town  
 They break forth, by the *Gracian* Troops unknown. 860  
 As from a diff'rent Quarter of the Sky  
 Two Thunder-bolts, with Ruin pregnant, fly,  
 And thro' the Clouds a Length of Light extend;  
 Thus thro' the Fields their Course the Tigers bend,  
 And, fiercely growling, as they rush along, 865  
 Invade a Stragler of th' *Inachian* Throng,  
 The Prophet's Charioteer, as o'er the Meads  
 He drove to *Dirce's* Stream his Master's Steeds.  
 Next *Ida*, the *Tenarian*, they pursue,  
 With him *Ætolian* *Acamas* they slew. 870  
 The Coursers in Disorder speed their Flight,  
 Till brave *Aconteus*, kindled at the Sight  
*Aconteus*, expert in the sylvan Chace,  
 (In fair *Arcadia* was his native Place)  
 To the Pursuit well-arm'd with Weapons sped, 875  
 As turning to their much-lov'd *Thebes*, they fled,

BOOK VII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 339

And, eager his long-studied Art to prove,  
 Thro' their pierc'd Back, and gushing Bowels drove  
 The level'd Jav'lin.——To the Town again  
 They fly, and flying, draw upon the Plain 880  
 A bloody Line, while o'er their upper Skin  
 The Darts appear, the Points deep-lodg'd within.  
 They imitate with Groans the human Cry,  
 And to the Walls their wounded Breasts apply.  
 This seen, such Shrieks and mournful Claimors rise, 885  
 As if (the City made a hostile Prize)  
 The *Tyrian* Fanes and sacred Mansions shone  
 With *Argive* Fires, and Splendors not their own.  
 Less would they grieve, should *Cadmus'* regal Hall,  
 Or fair *Harmonia's* bridal Chamber fall. 890  
 But *Phœgeus*, to revenge his injur'd God,  
 With haughty Mien towards *Acontes* strode;  
 And as disarm'd, he triumph'd o'er the slain,  
 Aim'd a destructive Blow, nor aim'd in vain.  
 The youthful Bands of *Tegæ* fly too late, 895  
 To save the Warrior, and avert his Fate.  
 Thrown o'er the slaughter'd Animals, he lies,  
 And to th' offended Pow'r a Victim dies.  
 The Council broke and Congress held in vain  
 O'er all the Camp loud Tumults rise again. 900  
 Back thro' the hostile Troops *Jocasta* flies,  
 Nor longer on her Pray'rs or Tears relies.

v. 879. *To the Town again*] These Lines are taken from the following of *Virgil*, who speaking of the wounded Stag, says.

Saucius at quadrupes nota intra tecta refugit,  
 Successitque gemens stabulis, questuque cruentus,  
 Atque imploranti similis, tectum omne replevit. v. 500.

Her and her Daughters thence the *Greeks* remove,  
 While *Tydeus* strives th' Advantage to improve.  
 Go, hope for Peace, and the just Fight delay, 905  
 Till the more prudent Foe commence the Fray.  
 Say, could ye thus the Work of Death adjourn,  
 And wait for the commission'd Queen's Return.  
 He spoke, and to his Comrades high display'd,  
 ( A Signal of the Charge) his naked Blade. 910  
 On either Side now Wrath and Vengeance-rise,  
 And one vast Shout groans upward to the Skies.  
 No martial Laws observ'd, nor Order known,  
 The Soldiers with their Captains mix, nor own  
 Superior Rank : Horse, Foot and rattling Cars 915  
 Form one dire *Chaos*.—Urg'd by furious *Mars*,  
 Headlong they rush, no Leisure giv'n to shew  
 Themselves, or from the Foe their Comrades know.  
 This Mode of Fight the closing Armies bore.  
 The Trumpets, Horns and Clarions now no more, 920  
 As whilom, in the marching Van appear,  
 But with the Standards join'd, bring up the Rear.  
 Such rose the Conflict from few Drops of Blood,  
 And to an Ocean swell'd the purple Flood,  
 As Winds at first make Trial of their Force 925  
 On Leaves and Trees, then bolder in their Course,

v. 905. *Go, hope for Peace*] Our Author seems in this Place to have had an Eye to the ironical Scoff of *Turnus* upon the *Latians* in the 11th Book of the *Æneid*, as may be seen from the *præcepta temporis* *Tydeus utitur*, which is an Imitation of *arrepito tempore Turnus*.

Imo, ait, O cives, *arrepito tempore Turnus*,  
 Cogite concilium, & pacem laudate sedentes, &c.

v. 925. *As Winds at first*] This Simile is borrowed from *Virgil*.  
 So Winds, while yet unfledg'd in Woods they lie,  
 In Whispers first their tender Voices try:

# BOOK VII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 341

O'erturn the Forests, bear the Groves away,  
 And lay whole Mountains open to the Day.  
 Ye Muses, now record your Country's Hosts,  
 And sing the Wars that vex'd your native Coasts, 930  
 For dwelling near the Blood-mark'd Seat of Fight,  
 The War's whole Art was obvious to your Sight,  
 What Time th' *Aonian* Lyre's mellifluous Sound  
 Was in the louder Blast of Trumpets drown'd.  
 The Horse of *Pterelas*, unus'd to Arms, 935  
 And new to all the Battle's dire Alarms,  
 Soon as his wearied Hand had broke the Reins.  
 Transports his Master to the distant Plains,  
 The Spear of *Tydeus* through his Shoulder flies,  
 Then glancing down, transpierces both his Thighs, 940  
 And nails him to the Seat : th' affrighted Steed,  
 Fix'd to his Rider, bounds along the Mead,  
 And bears him on, tho' now he wields no more  
 His Arms and Bridle ting'd with reeking Gore.  
 The Centaur thus (his Life in Part retain'd) 945  
 Hangs from the Courser which he lately rein'd.  
 The Conflict glows. *Menaceus* vents his Rage  
 On *Periphas*. In adverse Arms engage  
*Hippomedon* and *Sybaris*, while near  
 Rasth *Itys*, and th' *Arcadian* Prince appear. 950  
 A Sword, O *Sybaris*, suppress'd thy Breath ;  
 Young *Itys* from a Shaft receiv'd his Death,

Then issue on the Main with bellowing Rage,  
 And Storms to trembling Mariners preface. *Dryden's Æn.*

v. 941. *Ye Muses, now record your Country's*] See Note on the 41st  
 Line of the 4th Book, and 541st of the 8th.

v. 957. *The Centaur thus, &c.*] A Poet is not confined in his Com-  
 parisons to Things that really have an Existence in Nature : he may  
 derive them as well from those that have only a Place in the Crea-  
 tion of Fancy, and World of Imagination. Of this latter Sort is  
 the

While *Periphas* beneath a Javelin bled.  
 The Steel of *Hamon* lops away the Head  
 Of *Grecian Caneus*, whose wide-yawning Eyes 955  
 Explore the sever'd Trunk that bleeding lies.  
 This *Abas* saw, and rush'd to spoil the Foe ;  
 When lo ! an Arrow from an *Argive* Bow  
 Prevents his Aim,—expiring with a Groan,  
 He quits the hostile Buckler and his own. 960  
*Euneus*, thee what Dæmon could persuade  
 To leave thy rosy Patron's hallow'd Shade,  
 That Shade, to which thou should'st have been confin'd,  
 For War's tumultuous Fury ill-resign'd ?  
 Ah ! hope not thou to scatter wild Affright 965  
 Whose fine-wove Shield (a poor Defence in Fight)  
 With Ivy-Wreaths, on *Nysa* cull'd, is crown'd,  
 And whose white Stole, descending on the Ground,  
 Displays its silken Fringe.—Beneath his Hair  
 Each Shoulder lies conceal'd with artful Care. 970  
 The tender Down his florid Cheeks o'erspreads ;  
 While his weak Cuirass shines with purple Threads.  
 A Woman's Bracelets on his Arms he bears,  
 And on his Feet embroider'd Sandals wears.  
 A Jasper-Button, set in purest Gold 975  
 Clasp'd his Robes, grac'd with many a rustling Fold.  
 A Quiver, which a Lynx's Hide furrounds,  
 And polish'd Bow-Case on his Back resounds.

the Simile before us, which admirably well illustrates the Look and Posture of the dying Warrior, and is as strong and expressive, as it is concise.

v. 965. *Ah ! hope not thou*] It may be observed, that those Priests and Ministers of the Gods, who bear a Part in the *Theban* War, are distinguished from other Leaders by the Splendor and Richness of their Habits.—Our Poet seems to have had in View the *Chloens* of *Virgil* at the Time he wrote this.

# BOOK VII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 343

Full of the raging God, the Warrior hies  
 Amid the Press, and thus loud-vaunting cries, 980  
 Restrain your Rage.—These Walls *Apollo* shew'd  
 To *Cadmus*, for his high Deserts bestow'd;  
 These Walls to build (if we may credit Fame)  
 The willing Rocks, an happy Omen, came.  
 Our Nation, sacred to the Pow'rs above, 985  
 Alliance claims with *Mars* and greater *Jove* :  
 Nor feign we this to be the native Earth  
 Of *Hercules*, and Place of *Bacchus*' Birth.  
 Fierce *Capaneus* towards the Boaster steers  
 His Course, and brandishes two beamy Spears. 990  
 As when the King of Beasts at early Dawn  
 Springs from his Thicket to the dewy Lawn,  
 And views a Deer that bounds along the Green,  
 Or Calf, whose budding Horns are scarcely seen,  
 Tho' the stern Swains a dreadful Circle form, 995  
 And darted Javelins rain a steely Storm,  
 Fearless, regardless, he pursues his Way,  
 And unappall'd with Wounds, invades the Prey.

v. 991. *As when, &c.*] This Simile is borrowed from *Homer*.

Ὡς λῖον ἰχάρη μεγάλη ἐπὶ σώματι κύρσας,  
 εὐρὺν ἢ ἱλαφον περὶόν, ἢ ἄγχιον αἶζα,  
 Πεινῶν μάλα γὰρ τι κατιόλιν, ἅπτηρ ἂν αὐτὸν  
 Σούονταί τε χεῖρες τι κύνες, θαλεροῖτ' αἰζηοί.  
 Ὡς ἰχάρη, &c.

As *Virgil* has copied it too, I shall give the Reader an Opportunity of comparing the two Imitations with the Original.

Impastus stabula alta Leo ceu sæpe peragrans,  
 (Suadet enim vefana fames) si forte fugacem  
 Conspexit capream, aut furgentem in cornu cervum,  
 Gaudet hians immane, comasque arrexit & hæret  
 Visceribus super accumbens; lavat improba teter  
 Ora cruor.

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# 344 STATIUS's THEBAID. BOOK VII

Thus *Capaneus*, exulting o'er the Foe,  
 With his pois'd Javelin meditates a Blow, 1000  
 But ere the pond'rous Weight of Death descends,  
 With Blasphemy Reproaches thus he blends.  
 Why dost thou, doom'd to bleed beneath my Spear  
 With Shrieks unmanly strike our Hosts with Fear?  
 In wordy Wars with *Tyrian* Dames engage, 1005  
 But where's the vaunted Author of thy Rage?  
 Would he were present! ere he scarce had said,  
 Unknowing of Repulse, the Weapon fled,  
 And faintly tinkled on the glitt'ring Shield;  
 Whose folded Hides a speedy Passage yield, 1010  
 Forth wells the Blood, his Armour knocks the Ground,  
 And with long Sobs the Plates of Gold resound.  
 He dies, he dies, the rash Boy-Warrior dies,  
 And wept and honour'd by his Patron lies  
 Him drunken *Ismaros* (the *Thyrus* broke) 1015  
 And *Timolus*, long reluctant to the Yoke,  
 Him *Nysa*, and *Thesean Naxos* mourn,  
 And *Ganges*, to discharge his Orgies sworn.  
 Nor was *Eteocles* in Combat slow;  
 Less oft his milder Brother aims a Blow. 1020  
 Conspicuous in his Car the Prophet sate:  
 His Steeds, as prescient of their hast'ning Fate,

1020. *Less oft his milder Brother*] The Poet here pays a great Compliment to *Polynices*. He tells the Reader, that while *Eteocles* is wading through Blood and Carnage to the Crown, and making Havock among the *Grecians*, *Polynices* was checked in his Conquest by the tender Impulses of Humanity, and Regard to his Countrymen.

v. 1021. *Conspicuous in his Car, &c.*] We find *Jupiter* in the seventeenth Book of the *Iliad*, bestowing the same Honours on *Hector*, and dignifying his Exit with a Blaze of Glory, as *Mr. Pope* expresses it.



# BOOK VII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 345

With Dread move on, while Clouds of Dust arise,  
 Obscure the Fight, and blacken half the Skies.  
 Him *Phæbus* honours on his dying Day, 1025  
 And gives a Lustre to his setting Ray.  
 He decks his Shield and Helm with starry Fires ;  
 While *Mars* with fiercest Rage his Soul inspires,  
 And, in Compliance to the God's Request,  
 From hostile Swords defends his manly Breast, 1030  
 That pure, nor violated here above  
 By Wounds, he may descend to *Stygian Jove*.  
 Thus, conscious, he must soon resign his Breath,  
 Serene, he walks the dreadful Path of Death  
 And rushes on his Foes.—Despair of Life 1035  
 Supplies new Strength and Vigour in the Strife.  
 His Limbs increase in Beauty, Force and Size,  
 And ne'er before so well he read the Skies.  
 With unextinguish'd Heat of War he glows,  
 And pours redoubled Fury on his Foes. 1040  
 Oft was he known to break with lenient Art  
 The Strokes of Chance, and ease the human Heart,  
 T'encroach on Fate's just Rights and interpose  
 To save the wretched from impending Woes.

— Δὴ δὲ μὴν Ἄρης  
 Δανδὲς ἰνυάλοι· πλῆθος δ' ἄρ' αἰ μέλας ἐπὶ λῶς  
 Ἄλκιος καὶ Διὸς.—

v. 1038. *And ne'er before*] *Amphiaras* is represented as being endowed with a greater Degree of Prescience and Divination just before his Death, which Circumstance brings to my Remembrance four Lines of the celebrated *Waller*.

— Wiser Men become,  
 As they draw near to their eternal Home.  
 Leaving the old, both Worlds at once they view,  
 That stand upon the Threshold of the new.

# 346 STATIUS: THEBALD. Book VM.

Alas! how chang'd from him, who great and good 1045  
 At *Phæbus'* Shrine in holy Office stood,  
 Who what each low'ring Cloud portended knew,  
 And Omens read from ev'ry Wing that flew!  
 A countless Herd expir'd beneath his Blade  
 (Unhappy Victims to his future Shade) 1050  
 As when fell Planets rule the deathful Year,  
 And dart Destruction from their baleful Sphere.  
*Pblegyas* and *Phyleus* fell (his Javelin thrown)  
 His Scythe-hung Car mows *Cremetaon* down,  
 And *Cbromis*: one in adverse Fight was slain; 1055  
 His Knee cut off, the other press'd the Plain.  
 Next *Cbromis*, *Iphinous*, and *Sages* bled,  
 By missive Weapons rank'd among the dead.  
 Unhorn'd *Lycoreus* groans his Soul away,  
 And *Gyas*, sacred to the God of Day; 1060  
 His Heim uncrested by the forceful Spear,  
 He knew, but knew too late the mitred Seer.  
 Then at *Alcatboüs* a Stone he threw,  
 The well-aim'd Stone the hapless Warrior flew.  
 Rear'd on the Margin of *Carystos'* Flood 1065  
 His House, with Infants Cries resounding, stood.  
 His Friends at length the senseless Wretch persuade  
 To change the Sailor's for the Soldier's Trade.  
 Nor dying he prefers th' experienc'd Main,  
 And wintry Tempests to the bloody Plain. 1070

v. 1051. *As when fell Planets*] *Homer, Virgil and Milton* have fine  
 Similies drawn from Planets, Comets, &c. there is one of the last  
 mentioned Author in particular, that is wonderfully sublime.

————He Like a Comet burn'd  
 That fires the Length of *Ophiuchus* huge  
 In th' Arctic Sky; and from his horrid hair  
 Shakes Pestilence and War.

The Rout and Slaughter of his Host survey'd,  
*Asopian Hypseus* rushes to their Aid :  
 Rage in his Eyes, and Ruin in his Hand,  
 He galls the Rear of the *Tyrinthian* Band,  
 But the Priest seen, the Tide of Wrath he turns 1075  
 On him, and with redoubled Fury burns.  
 Rang'd in a Wedge, his Troops beside him stood,  
 And form'd with Spears erect an ambient Wood.  
 He lifts, in Front of all the hostile Ranks,  
 A Javelin, cull'd on his paternal Banks, 1080  
 And cries.—O Father of th' *Aonian* Streams,  
 Whose Surface with ethereal Embers gleams,  
 Direct my Aim : this I, thy Son, demand,  
 And th' Oaken Spear, the Native of thy Strand.  
 If thou hast fought the Ruler of the Skies,  
 Give me the mighty *Phæbus* to despise.  
 From his gash'd Head I'll tear the circling Crown,  
 And with his Armour in thy Current drown.  
*Asopus* heard his Pray'r, but *Sol* deny'd  
 Indulgence to his Son, and turn'd aside 1090  
 To faithful *Herses* the well-darted Spear,  
*Herses*, the valiant Augur's Charioteer.  
*Apollo* now directs the flowing Reins,  
 And *Aliagmon's* Form and Visage feigns.

v. 1077. *Rang'd in a Wedge*] On reading this Passage, how naturally do the following Verses of *Milton* steal in upon our Memory!

While thus he spake, th' angelic Squadrons bright  
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned Horns, &c.

Book 4. Line 977.

v. 1093. *Apollo now directs*] This Piece of Machinery is beautiful to a great Degree : it is imitated from the 5th Book of *Homer*, where *Pallas* thrusts *Sthenelus* out of *Diomedes's* Chariot, and vaulting into it herself, assists that Hero in his Attack upon *Mars*.

Their

Their Souls unman'd, and all Resistance lost, 1095  
 A sudden Panic seiz'd the *Theban* Host.  
 Their Gripe relax'd, their Weapons strew the Ground;  
 They fall thro' Fear, and die without a Wound.  
 'Twas doubtful, if th' augmented Burden speeds,  
 Or clogs the Progress of the furious Steeds. 1100  
 As from some Cloud-capt Hill a Fragment worn  
 By Dint of Age, or by fierce Whirlwinds torn,  
 Rolls down, and sweeps along in its Descent  
 Men, Trees and Cots from their Foundations rent;  
 Nor stops, till some deep Vale confines its Force, 1105  
 Or River, intercepted in its Course.  
 So rolls th' ensanguin'd Car beneath the Load  
 Of the great Hero, and the greater God.

v. 1101. *As from*] I wonder, that neither Mr. *Pope* nor Mr. *Wharton* have taken Notice of this truly sublime Comparison in their Observation on a similar one in *Homer* and *Virgil*, especially as they have quoted one of *Tasso*, in my Opinion, much inferior to our Author's.—I shall transcribe all three.

Ὀλοσίτροχος ὡς ἀπὸ πίστεως,  
 Ὅτι κατὰ σιφάνης ποναμὸς χαιμάροιο ὄρη,  
 Γῆρας ἀσπίτω ἔμωρον ἀναιδέϊο ἔχματα πίστεως,  
 Ὑψι τ' ἀναθρόσκον πίπτεται, κτυπίει δὲ θ' ὑπ' αὐτῇ  
 Ὑλῃ· ἰδ' ἀσφαλῆως δῖαι ἔμπιδον, ὅφρ' ἂν ἱκηται  
 Ἰσκιπιδον, τότε δ' ἔτι κυλίνδεται, ἰαγύμνιός περ.

Ac veluti montis saxum de vertice præceps  
 Cum ruit avulsum vento, ceu turbidus imber  
 Proluit, aut annis solvit sublapsa vetustas;  
 Fertur in abruptum magno mons improbus actu,  
 Exultatque solo, sylvas, armenta virosque  
 Involvens secum.

Qual gran sasso talor, ch'o la vecchiezza  
 Solve da un monte, o svelle ira de' venti  
 Ruinosa dirupa, e parta, e spezza  
 Le selve, e colle case anco gli armenti  
 Tal già trahea della, &c.

v. 1107. *So rolls*] It is remarkable, that these two Lines are almost a Transcript of *Homer's*.

High o'er the deathful Scene *Apollo* stands,  
 And wields the Spears and Reins with equal Hands: 1110  
 Unerring Skill he to his Priest imparts,  
 But mocks the *Theban* Shooter's useleſs Arts:  
 Now *Antiphus*, unaided by his Steed,  
 And *Manalus* lie proſtrate on the Mead,  
*Etbion* then of *Heliconian* Strain; 1115  
*Polites*, noted for his Brother ſlain,  
 And *Lampus*, who with Luſt tranſported, ſtrove  
 To force fair *Mantbo's* interdicted Love:  
 At him the God himſelf directs a Dart,  
 And drove the ſhining Miſchief to his Heart. 1120  
 On Hills of ſlain the rapid Courſers tread,  
 Deſtroy the living, and deform the dead.  
 The mangled Carcaſes are furrow'd o'er;  
 And the daſh'd Axles bluſh with human Gore.  
 O'er ſome the kindling Car, unnotic'd, rolls, 1125  
 Breaks ev'ry Limb, and cruſhes out their Souls;  
 Whiſt others, helpleſs with a mortal Wound,  
 Foreſee it ſmoaking o'er the diſtant Ground.  
 Now thro' his Hands the ſlipp'ry Bridle glides,  
 And the beſprinkled Beam, unſtable, ſlides: 1130  
 The Steeds, their Hoofs involv'd in Carnage ſtood,  
 And the ſpik'd Wheels are clogg'd with clotted Blood.  
 The Javelins, which (their Points infix'd within)  
 Stand extant on the Surface of the Skin,  
 The raging Hero from the wounded drew, 1135  
 Whoſe parting Souls with Groans the Car purſue.  
 At length (his whole Divinity confeſs'd)  
*Phabus* the wondring Augur thus addreſs'd.

Use well thy Time, whilst in Respect to me  
Grim Death delays the Work of Destiny. 1140

We're overcome.—Whate'er the Fates ordain,  
They execute, nor weave the Woof again.

Go then, and mindful of the Promise made,  
Gladden Elysium with thy present Shade,  
Secure, no Burial-Honours thou shalt want, 1145

Nor sue in vain for cruel *Creon's* Grant.

To this the Chief, surcharg'd with hostile Spoils,  
Replies, and for a while respites from Toils :

At first I knew thee thro' thy borrow'd Look ;  
Beneath th' unwonted Weight the Chariot shook 1150

Yet say, how long wilt thou defer my Fate ?

These Honours ill become my wretched State.

E'en now I hear the Porter's triple Yell,

Hoarse-sounding *Stryx*, and all the Streams of Hell.

Take then the laurell'd Honours of my Head, 1055

Too holy for the Regions of the dead.

If to thy dying Prophet ought is due,

With my last Voice this Boon I now renew,

And to thy Wrath resign my trait'rous Spouse ;

Avenge, avenge the broken Marriage-Vows. 1260

The grieving God descending on the Plains,

The Coursers groan'd, and bow'd to Dust their Manes.

Thus fares a Vessel in a stormy Night,

When the twin-Stars withhold their friendly Light ;

Death in their Thoughts, they shriek at ev'ry Blast,

And deem the present Moment for their last.

And now the grassy Surface of the Mead,

Convuls'd with frequent Tremors 'gan recede :

A thicker Cloud of Dust obscures the Skies,

And Murmurs dire from deepest Hell arise. 1170

**BOOK VII, STATIUS' THEBAID. 351**

This Sound mistaken for the Crash of Fight,  
From Field the trembling Warriours urge their  
Flight.

Another Tremor now bends to the Ground  
Men, Horses, Arms, and shakes the Fields around.  
The leafy Grove inclines its various Head,  
And silent from his Banks *Ismenos* fled.

The public Anger lost in private Fears,  
They ground their Arms, and leaning on their Spears,  
Start back, as on each other's Face they view  
Wild Terror imag'd in a pallid Hue. 1180

As when *Bellona* forms a naval Fray,  
In Scorn of *Neptune*, on the watry Way :  
If haply some fell Tempest interpose,  
Each thoughtful of himself, neglects his Foes ;  
The common Dangers cause their Ire to cease, 1185  
And mutual Fears impose a sudden Peace.

Such was the fluctuating Fight to view :  
Whether from subterraneous Prisons flew  
Imbosom'd Blasts, and gather'd from afar,  
In one vast Burst discharg'd the windy War : 1190

Or latent Springs had worn the rotten Clay,  
And open'd to themselves a gradual Way :  
Or on this Side the swift Machine of Heav'n  
Inclin'd, by more than wonted Impulse driv'n,  
Or whether *Neptune* bade old Ocean roar, 1195

And dash'd the briny Foam from Shore to Shore :  
Or Earth herself would warn by these Portents  
The Seer, or Brother-Kings of both Events ;  
Lo ! she discloses wide her hollow Womb :

(Night fear'd the Stars, the Stars the nether Gloom.)

The

The Prophet and his Coursers, while they strive  
 To pass, the yawning Cleft ingulphs alive :  
 Nor did he quit the Reins and Arms in Hand,  
 But with them plung'd to the *Tartarean* Strand ;  
 And as he fell, gaz'd backward on the Light ; 1205  
 And griev'd to see the Field would soon unite,  
 Till now a lighter Tremor clos'd again  
 The Ground, and darken'd *Pluto's* wide Domain.

THE



**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE EIGHTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

*THE Poet, having described the Effects of Amphiar-  
 raus's Coming into the infernal Regions, introduces  
 Pluto expressing his Displeasure at his abrupt Intrusion, and  
 exhorting the Furies to retaliate the Insult by an Excursion  
 to the World above. At length, however, Amphiar-  
 raus pacifies him. The Confederates, terrified by this extraordi-  
 nary Phænomenon, quit the Field in great Disorder and  
 Confusion, and express their Concern for the Death of the  
 Seer in a long Oration. The Thebans spend the Night in  
 Feasting and Jollity. Adrastus calls a Council in the  
 Morning, in which it is resolved, that Thiodamas should  
 succeed Amphiar-  
 raus as Augur: who, in Pursuance of his  
 Election appeases the Earth by Sacrifice, and delivers a fu-  
 neral Oration in Praise of his Predecessor. The Battle re-  
 commencing, Tydeus on the Part of the Allies, and Hæ-  
 mon on the Part of the Thebans, signalize themselves, by  
 Feats of Proweß and Gallantry. The Thebans, dis-  
 heartened by the Death of Atys, and Retreat of Hæmon,  
 are rallied by Menæceus, and renew the Fight with re-  
 doubled Vigour and Alacrity. The Poet then returns to  
 Thebes: and while Ismene is relating a Dream, which  
 she had about her Lover Atys, to her Sister, he is brought  
 into the Palace just upon the Point of Death: this gives  
 Rise to a very affecting Scene. Tydeus in the mean Time  
 makes a great Slaughter of his Enemies; and meeting with  
 Eteocles, exchanges a Dart with him: but the other fly-  
 ing, in the Pursuit of him he is overpowered by his En-  
 mies, and receiving a mortal Wound, expires gnawing the  
 Head of Menalippus, who gave it him.*

## THE

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE EIGHTH.

**S**OON as the Prophet reach'd the dreary Coasts  
 Of *Styx*, the Mansion of pale-visag'd Ghosts,  
 Explor'd the Secrets of the World below,  
 And pierc'd the Regions of eternal Woe;  
 His Garb terrific, and loud-braying Arms 5  
 Fill *Pluto's* wide Dominion with Alarms.  
 The Shades with Horror gaze upon his Car,  
 His Weapons, Steeds distinguish'd in the War,  
 And his new Body: for he neither came  
 Black from the Urn, nor season'd with the Flame; 10  
 But with the Sweat of *Mars* was cover'd o'er,  
 And his hack'd Target stain'd with dewy Gore.  
 Nor had *Erimys* yet with impious Hand  
 O'er his cold Members wav'd her flaming Brand,

There is something very awful and solemn in the Poet's Description of the Terror and Confusion which the Presence of *Amphiaras* occasioned in the infernal Regions. But what we should principally regard it for, is the great Light it throws on many Parts of the heathen Mythology, which would otherwise seem dark and mysterious. In short, it is altogether as fine a Representation of Hell, as any we meet with in the ancient Poets.

Or *Proserpine*, admitting him a Ghost, 14  
 Inscrib'd his Name upon the murky Post  
 Nor to the Task the Sisters' Hands suffic'd;  
 The Work as yet unfinish'd he surpriz'd:  
 Then, nor till then, they cut the fatal Thread,  
 And freed the Seer, irregularly dead. 20  
 The Manes of *Elisium* gaz'd around,  
 (Their Pleasures interrupted at the Sound)  
 And those, who station'd in the Gulph beneath,  
 An Air less pure, and less enliv'ning breathe.  
 Then groan the Lakes that parch'd with Sulphur glow;  
 And sluggish Waters, scarcely seen to flow; 26  
 While *Charon*, wont to plough the loaded Stream,  
 Mourns his lost Fare, a melancholy Theme;  
 And grieves, that Shades had gain'd the *Stygian* Shore,  
 By Chasms in Earth, and Means unknown before. 30  
 In the mid Part of his unhappy State  
 The King of *Erebus* in Judgment sate:  
 The Shades he question'd on their former Crimes,  
 Displeas'd with all that fill his dreary Climes,  
 There Death in various Shapes and Orders stands, 35  
 The Sister Fiends with Vengeance in their Hands,  
 And Punishment, distinguish'd in the Throng  
 By Chains harsh clanking, as she strides along.  
 With the same Thumb the Fates condemn and save.  
 Mean while fresh Numbers issue from the Grave. 40

v. 39. *With the same Thumb*] The Thumb was a Token of Fa-  
 vour and Displeasure among the Antients. When a Man pos-  
 sessed his Thumb, it was a Sign of his Regard, as *Pliny* informs us, *Lib.*  
*28. Cap. 11. Pollicis, cum favorem, preterea etiam precoribus habetur.*  
 When the Thumb was turned, his Displeasure was signified, which  
 was so great a Mark of Malevolence, that by this alone the People

There *Minos* with his Colleague hears each Cause,  
 Restrains the King, and mitigates the Laws.  
 Nor was *Cocytos* absent Stream of Woes,  
 And *Phegethon*, that kindles as it flows.  
 Or *Styx*, whom e'en th' attesting Gods revere. 45  
 Then trembling *Pluto* first experienc'd Fear;  
 And spoke in Wrath, as sick'ning he survey'd  
 The starry Splendors, through the Cleft display'd.  
 What Pow'r has forc'd Earth's Barrier thus away,  
 And join'd the upper and the nether Day? 50  
 Who pierc'd our Gloom? say, whence these Threats  
 arise,  
 From the stern Lord of Ocean or the Skies?

of *Rome* ordered the Gladiators to be slain, as we learn from *Ju-venal*, *Sat.* 3.

Munera nunc edunt, et verso pollice vulgi  
 Quemlibet occidunt populariter,

v. 43. *Nor was Cocytos*] *Milton* has given us a fine Picture of the Rivers of Hell in the 2d Book of *Par. Lost*, Verse 577.

Abhorred *Styx*, the Flood of deadly Hate,  
 Sad *Acheron* of Sorrow, black and deep:  
*Cocytos*, nam'd of Lamentation loud  
 Heard on the rueful Stream; fierce *Phegethon*  
 Whose Waves of Torrent Fire inflame with Rage.  
 Far off from those a slow and silent Stream,  
*Lethe*, the River of Oblivion rolls  
 Her watry Labyrinth, whereof who drinks  
 Forthwith his former State and Being forgets,  
 Forgets both Joy and Grief, Pleasure and Pain.

v. 45. *Or Styx*] Though I have spoken of this River elsewhere, I cannot deny myself the Pleasure of transcribing *Hesiod's* humorous Account of the Punishment of those Gods who had swore falsely by it. For one whole Year (says he) they must abstain from Nectar and Ambrosia, and lie on the Ground dumb and lethargic. After a Year, greater Punishments await them: for they are banished for nine Years, and debarred the Society of the Gods. At the End of the tenth Year however, they resume their pristine State and Dignity.

# 358 STATIUS: THEBAID. Book VIII.

Boaster, stand forth on thy own Terms of Fight;  
Hence let Form sink to Chaos, Day to Night.  
To whom more dear?—I guard the guilty World, 55  
Hither from Heav'n by adverse Fortune hurld.  
Nor e'en is this my own: I rule in vain,  
When *Jove* encroaches thus upon my Reign.  
When on thy Throne the Rays of *Titan* beat,  
And Light abhor'd pervades my gloomy Seat. 60  
Wants he, the King of Heav'n, my Strength to prove?  
The fetter'd Giants will each Doubt remove,  
The restless *Titans* (who did erst aspire  
Earth to revisit) and his wretched Sire.  
Why wills he, that my Toils should never cease, 65  
Why must the Light I lost disturb my Peace?  
But should it please, each Kingdom I'll display,  
And veil in *Stygian* Mists the Blaze of Day.  
Hence the twin Sons of *Tyndar* I'll detain,  
Nor render back th' *Arcadian* Youth again. 70  
For why does he thus journey to and fro,  
And waft around the Messages of Woe?  
Why should *Ixion*, with fresh Labours worn,  
And thirsting *Tantalus* my Anger mourn?  
How long shall living Ghosts, unpunish'd roam 75  
From Bank to Bank, and violate my Dome?

v. 49. *What Pow'r*] Of all the Oration's in the *Thebaid* there is none that can give less Pleasure to the Reader, and consequently less Credit to the Translator than this before us. Not that *Plato* speaks without Spirit, but his Speech has many Allusions to dark Circumstances in heathen Mythology; so that I very much question, if, after all the Pains I have taken, it is intelligible to the greatest Part of my Readers. It is not of a Nature to shine in Poetry: and all I could do to make it tolerable, was to give it as smooth Numbers as possible, and curtail that Length which makes it still more disgusting.

With me *Pirithous* durst once contend,  
 And *Theseus* sworn to his audacious Friend :  
 Then of *Alcidas* too (my Guard remov'd)  
 The furious Arm and Strength robust I prov'd. 80  
 Now Hell, because some idle Feuds arise  
 Between two petty Princes, open lies.  
 I saw, when *Orpheus* the sad Strain pursu'd,  
 The Fiends in Tears, the Sisters' Tasks renew'd.  
 The sweet Musician o'er my Wrath prevail'd, 85  
 Yet, heedless of the stern Condition, fail'd.  
 Once, and but once I fought the World above,  
 And snatch'd in *Sicily* the Joys of Love :  
 The bold Excursion stung th' ethereal Prince,  
 As the hard Laws that quick ensu'd, evince. 90  
 At each six Moons her Mother at my Hands  
 My Consort for an equal Term demands.  
 But why these Complaints ?—Go, Minister of Ill,  
 Revenge the Insult, and our Wrath fulfill.  
 If ought yet unconceiv'd, and unexpress'd 95  
 Thy ready Wit, and fertile Brain suggest,  
 On which thy Sisters may with Envy gaze,  
 And I with Wonder.—Go, and win our Praise.  
 But, as an Omen of our future Hate,  
 And as a Prelude to the stern Debate, 100  
 Let the two Brothers meet without the Wall,  
 And, fir'd by mutual Rage, in Combat fall.  
 Let one with more than brutal Fury feed  
 On his Foe's Head, expiring in the Deed,  
 Another the last fun'ral Flames deny, 105  
 And taint with Carcases his native Sky.  
 Such Acts may *Jupiter* with Pleasure view.  
 Nor let thy Wrath our Realms alone pursue.

Seek one, who may with Heav'n itself engage,  
 And with his Shield repell the Thund'rer's Rage. 110  
 Why should they rather dare thro' Hell to rove,  
 Than with heap'd Mountains scale the Walls of *Jove*?  
 This said, he ceas'd.—His dreary Palace takes  
 The Signal dire, and to the Centre shakes.  
 His Earth and that which overhangs him, nod 115  
 Beneath his Voice, and own the speaking God.  
 Great was the Shock, as when his Brother rolls  
 His Eyes around, and bends the starry Poles.  
 He then rejoins.—For thee, who durst explore  
 The sacred Void inviolate before, 120  
 What Pains can I devise?—half shrunk with Fear,  
 His Arms and Chariot gone, proceeds the Seer.  
 Yet still the Badges of his Order grace  
 The Chief extinct, and shade his clay-cold Face;  
 Tho' black, a Fillet decks his awful Brow, 125  
 And his Hand grasps a wither'd Olive-Bough.  
 If in this holy Synod I may speak,  
 And in my own Defence my Silence break,  
 Grand End of all Things, but to me who knew  
 Each mystic Cause, that mortal Eye can view) 130  
 Source of Existence, thy stern Threats resign  
 And to my Pray'r thy willing Ears incline;  
 Nor deign to punish one who strictly fears  
 To disobey, and all thy Laws reveres.  
 No Rape *Herculean* drew me to thy Coast, 135  
 Nor was illicit Venery my Boast:

135 *No Rape Herculean*] The Reader must observe, that *Hercules* himself did not design a Rape upon *Proserpine*, but only went down to Hell with a View of rescuing *Theseus* and *Pinichous*, who had attempted it, from the Punishment that *Pluto* had intended for them.



On these Insignia for the Truth rely,  
 Alas! my coward Heart ne'er soar'd so high.  
 Let not our Chariot pale thy Consort's Cheek,  
 Nor *Cerberus* with Grief his Cavern seek. 140  
 An Augur once by *Phæbus* much caress'd,  
 The gloomy Void of Chaos I attest,  
 (For why by *Sol* should *Pluto's* Subject swear)  
 That for no Crime this Punishment I bear.  
 This sacred Truth the *Cretan's* Urn must know, 145  
 This sacred Truth impartial *Minos* show.  
 Bought of my treach'rous Wife for cursed Gold,  
 And in the List of *Argive* Chiefs enroll'd,  
 Resign'd to Fate, I sought the *Theban* Plain,  
 Whence flock the Shades that scarce thy Realms  
 contain. 150  
 When (how my Soul yet dreads!) an Earthquake came  
 Big with Destruction, and my trembling Frame,  
 Rapt from the Midst of gaping Thousands, hurl'd  
 To Night eternal in thy nether World.  
 What were my Thoughts, while thro' Earth's hollow  
 Womb 155  
 I roll'd upheld in Air, and lost in Gloom?  
 Nought to my Comrades or my Country left,  
 Nor of my captive Life by *Thebes* bereft.  
 Doom'd never more to breathe *Lernean* Air,  
 Or to my wond'ring Friends, inurn'd, repair. 160  
 No sculptur'd Tomb to lengthen out my Fame,  
 No weeping Parents, nor odorous Flame:  
 To thee the whole of fun'ral Pomp I bear,  
 Nor shall I ought with these fleet Coursers dare,  
 Or murmur to become a subject Shade: 165  
 I wave the Honours that were whilom paid:

No Prescience of the future dost thou want,  
 Secure of all the Destinies can grant.  
 But check thy Rage, the Deities regard,  
 And for my Spouse reserve the dire Reward : 170  
 If, in the Process of advancing Age,  
 She fall, a Victim worthier of thy Rage.  
 The Monarch heard, nor hearing disapprov'd,  
 Tho' loth to spare, and scorning to be mov'd.  
 The Lion thus, when menac'd with the Light 175  
 Of obvious Weapons, calls forth all his Might ;  
 But, if his prostrate Foe declines the Strife,  
 Stalks o'er him, and disdains so cheap a Life,  
 Mean while they seek the late-redoubted Car,  
 Adorn'd with Fillets, and the Wreaths of War, 180  
 Astonish'd, as by none it was survey'd,  
 Or crush'd in Conflict, or a Capture made.  
 The Troops, suspicious now, recoiling yield,  
 Walk round the Tracks of the treach'rous Field,  
 And all prefer the Sweets of vital Breath 185  
 To *Stygian* Pomp, and an inglorious Death.  
 While at a Distance in the Road to Fame  
*Adrastus* guides his Troops, *Palæmon* came,  
 The Messenger of Woe, and trembling cries,  
 (For scarce he trusted to his conscious Eyes, 190

v. 175. This Allusion to the Generosity of the Lion has the Sanction of all the Naturalists that ever treated on this Animal to confirm it. *Claudian* in his Eulogy on *Stilicon*, Lib. 4. says,

Obvia prostrernas, prostrataque more Leonum  
 Despicias alacres ardent quum sternere Tauros,  
 Transiliunt prædas humiles. Hac ipse magistrâ  
 Dat veniam victis, hac exhortante calores  
 Horrificos, & quæ nunquam nocitura timentur  
 Jurgia, contentus solo terrore coercet.

Tho station'd near the Chief ingulph'd, he saw,  
 All pale and sad, the discontinuous Flaw.)  
 O Monarch, turn thy Steps, and seek with Speed  
 The *Doric* Turrets, and our native Mead ;  
 If haply, where we left them, they remain. 195  
 No Arms we need ; the Battle bleeds in vain.  
 Our unavailing Swords why wield we more ?  
 When Earth (a Prodigy unseen of Yore)  
 Absorbs our Warriors. From beneath our Feet  
 The Ground we press seems striving to retreat. 200  
 I view'd myself the Path to Night profound,  
 Oeclides rushing thro' the sudden Wound,  
 Than whom of mortal Race was none more dear,  
 To the bright Lamps that gild yon azure Sphere.  
 Long did I stretch my fault'ring Hands, and strain 205  
 My Voice ; at length convinc'd, that Help was vain,  
 I ply'd the sounding Lash, and quickly left  
 The steaming Champaign, in huge Furrows cleft.  
 Nor common is the Ill ; the Mother knows  
 Her Sons, and Favour to the *Thebans* shows. 210  
 Thus he. The Monarch doubts, till *Mapsus* came,  
 And trembling *Astor*, who report the same.  
 But *Faint*, who loves each Terror to enhance,  
 Relates, that more had shar'd the same Mischance.  
 Spontaneous then the Soldiers quit their Ground, 215  
 Nor wait, as Custom was, the Trumpet's Sound.

v. 216. *Nor wait as Custom was*] *Lactantius* in his Note on this  
 Passage furnishes us with a Picoe of Antiquity, that, I believe, few  
 of our Readers are acquainted with : viz. that among the Ancients  
 every Soldier, previously to his being enlisted, took an Oath, that  
 he would never leave the Battle, before the Sounding of a Retreat.

Yet was their Progress slow. They scarcely trail  
Their Legs along, so much did Fear prevail.

Their very Steeds, as sensible, oppose  
Their Flight, regardless of repeated Blows; 220  
Nor, won by Blandishments, increase their Speed,  
Or lift their Eyes from the terrific Mead.

The *Thebans* push'd the Charge, till Vesper led  
Bright *Cynthia's* Steeds, with dusky Shades o'erspread:  
Now Night, that soon their Terrors must increase, 225  
Imposes a short Interval of Peace.

What were their Aspects, when they took their Fill  
Of Sorrow's Draught? full many a pearly Rill  
Stole from their Helms unlac'd. Nought then could  
ease

Their jaded Spirits that was wont to please. 230

They throw aside their Bucklers wetted o'er,  
Such as they were. Nor cleans'd their Darts of Gore,  
Nor prais'd their Horses, nor for Battle drest  
The high-rais'd Honours of the shining Crest.

Such was their Grief they scarcely care to close 235

Their Wounds, and staunch the Blood that freely flows;  
Or with the due Resource of Food and Rest

Renew their Strength, by Toils of War oppress'd:

All dwell with Tears on the late Augur's Praise,

His Love of Truth, and Merit of the Bays. 240

v. 225. *Now Night*] Milton has some beautiful Lines on the same Subject.

Now Night her Course began, and over Heav'n  
Indoing Darkness, grateful Truce impos'd,  
And Silence on the odious Din of War.

Par. Lost, B. 6. L. 406.

v. 239. *All dwell*] The Reader cannot but sympathize with the  
Grecians on the Loss of their Patriot and Prophet *Amphiaras*, whose  
Virtues

BOOK VIII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 365

One Ramour only thro' the Camp is spread,  
 That all their Fortune with the Gods is fled:  
 Where are his sacred Arms, rever'd in War,  
 His Crest with Fillets grac'd, and laurell'd Car?  
 Could not *Castalian* Lakes and Caves retard 245  
 His Death? was this his Patron God's Reward?  
 Who'll teach us now, what falling Stars declare,  
 And hallow'd Light'nings inauspicious Glare?  
 What Heav'n betokens in the Victim slain,  
 When ye should march; what Accidents detain? 250  
 What Hour is most averse to Dove-ey'd Peace  
 And when to bid the Trump of Discord cease?  
 Who now will all Futurity disclose,  
 The just Interpreter of Bliss or Woes?  
 To thee the War's Events were all foreknown, 255  
 And all the public Evils, and thy own;  
 Yet (such was Virtue's Influence) thou didst join  
 Our Troops, and clad in social Armour shine.  
 And when the fatal Hour and Period came,  
 Didst find a leisure Time to purchase Faine 260  
 By adverse Signs o'erthrown, and Heroes slain,  
 Till Heaps of Carcases deform'd the Plain.  
 What Deeds of Slaughter, and what Scenes of Death  
 Might we have seen, had Heav'n prolong'd thy Breath?  
 What Lot befalls thee? canst thou visit Earth 266  
 Again, and, as it were, renew thy Birth?

Virtues endear him to the latest Posterity. And here it may not be improper to observe, that the old Proposition, *All Men are alike after Death*, is only partially true. For the virtuous and useful Member of Society lives in the Memory of the Public, and is never thought of but with Sorrow, nor mentioned but with Honour; whereas the Villain and Pest of his Country is either soon forgotten, or remembered but with Infamy and Detestation.

Say, art thou thron'd beside thy fav'ring Fates,  
A Counsellor in all their high Debates?  
Still by a grateful Change dost thou obtain  
The Knowledge of the Future, and explain? 270  
Or did the Pow'r who rules the Realms below,  
In Pity to thy Sufferings, bestow  
Elysium, and her Birds of hallow'd Flight?  
Whate'er's thy Lot beneath, the God of Light,  
Bewailing long his Loss, shall loath Relief, 275  
And *Delphos* mourn thy Death in silent Grief.  
Shut on this Day shall *Delos* e'er remain,  
The Sea-girt *Tenedos*, and *Cyrrha's* Fane;  
No bold Enquirer ope the *Clarian* Gate,  
Nor *Branchus* from his Shrine interpret Fate: 280

v. 278. *Tenedos*] Is an Island of the *Hellefpont*, situated over against *Troy* and sacred to *Apollo*, whence *Chryses* in his Address to *Apollo*, says, *Ἰσθμίου πρὸς ἡρώεσσι*.

v. 278. And *Cyrrha's* Fane] See Note on the 673d Verse of the 3d Book.

v. 279. *The Clarian Gate*] This and the other Places here mentioned were noted for the most famous Oracles.

v. 280. Nor *Branchus* As a Supplement to my Note on the 686 Verse of the 3d Book, I shall describe the following Account of *Branchus* from *Varro*. 'Olus quidem decimus ab *Apolline*, cum in peregrinatione pranderet in littore, ac deinde proficisceretur, oblitus est filium nomine *Simerum*, qui pervenit in saltum *Pamphi* ejusdam, et cum esset receptus, cepit cum suis pueris capras pascere. Aliquandoprehenderunt cygnem, et illum veste cooperuerunt, dumque ipsi pugnant uter illum patri munus offerret, et essent fatigati certamine: rejecta veste mulierem invenerunt, et cum fugerent revocati ab eâ moniti sunt, ut patres unice *Simerum* diligeret puerum; illi quæ audierunt *Patroni* indicarunt. Tunc *Patron Simerum* pro filio suo nimio dilexit affectu, sique filium suam ducendam locavit uxorem. Illa cum pregnans ex eo exitum vidit in somniis per fauces suas introisse solem, et exiisse per uterum: ideo infans editus *Branchus* vocatus est quia mater ejus per fauces sibi viderat uterum penetrasse. Hic cum in sylvis *Apollinem* osculatus fuisset, comprehensus est ab eo, et acceptus co-

For *Lycia* none shall leave his native Air,  
 Nor for Advice to *Didyma* repair:  
*Jove's* panting Oaks shall on this Day be mute,  
 Nor horned *Ammon* grant the Pilgrim's Suit :  
 The very Laurels wither, Rivers cease 285  
 To flow, and *Trojan Thymbra* rests in Peace.  
 No certain Knowledge shall the Air unfold  
 By Chirpings sage, nor Destiny be told  
 By flapping Pinions.—Soon the Day shall come,  
 When, other Oracles suppressed and dumb, 290  
 Temples shall rise in Honour of thy Art,  
 And thy Responses ready Priests impart.  
 Such solemn Dirges with due Rev'rence paid  
 To the prophetic Monarch's honour'd Shade,  
 In Lieu of Rites funereal *Greece* bestows 295  
 And gives his wand'ring Ghost the wish'd Repose,  
 Then were their Souls unman'd with wild Affright.  
 And all with equal Horror loath the Fight.  
 Thus when some skilful Pilot yields his Breath,  
 The Crew desponding at his sudden Death, 300

' rōna virgaque vaticinari capit et subito nusquam comparuit. Tem-  
 ' plum ei factum est quod Branchiadon nominatur et Apollini Phi-  
 ' lesio pariter consecrata sunt templa, quæ ab osculo Branchi, sine  
 ' certamine puerorum, Philefia nuncupantur '

v. 299. *Thus, when*] Statius varies his Similies with all possible  
 Art, sometimes deriving them from the animal Creation, sometimes  
 from the Passions of Mankind, and sometimes from the vulgar  
 Scenes and Occurrences of Life; but wherever we follow him, we  
 find him a Faithful Copier of Nature. This before us, trifling and  
 unworthy of Notice as it may appear to some for its Brevity, is  
 notwithstanding very just, and answers in every Point to the Thing  
 described with the utmost Precision and Propriety. Nothing in Na-  
 ture could be more happily conceived, than the comparing *Am-  
 phiaraus*, who was the Guide and Oracle of his People, to the Pilot  
 of a Ship.

# 368 STATIUS's THEBAID. BOOK VIII.

Their Oars seem short of half their wonted Force,  
 And the fresh Gale less aidful to their Course.  
 But Converse long indulg'd had eas'd their Smart,  
 And dull'd each quick Sensation of the Heart,  
 When Sleep, unnotic'd, stole to their Relief, 305  
 And hush'd the Voice, and clos'd the Eye of Grief.  
 Not so the joyful *Thebans* spent the Night ;  
 But, favour'd by the Stars and *Phæbe's* Light,  
 In the throng'd Streets and Houses, madly gay,  
 With various Sports they chac'd the Hours away. 310  
 Each Centinel lay dozing at his Post,  
 And senseless Riot reign'd thro' all the Host.  
 In antic Measures some obliquely bound  
 To the hoarse Drum's and tinkling Cymbal's Sound,  
 While others pipe, and swell the mellow Flute, 315  
 Or sing in Concert with the shrill-ton'd Lute  
 Their Gods propitious, and in Order name  
 The Deities, whose Favours Worship claim.  
 Pæans arise to ev'ry Pow'r divine,  
 And the crown'd Goblets foam with sparkling Wine.  
 They ridicule the *Grecian* Augur's Death, 321  
 And, as in seeming Contrast, spend their Breath  
 In Praise of their *Tiresias*. Now they sing  
 The Feats and Prowess of each ancient King,  
*Thebes* from its Origin celestial trace, 325  
*Jove* and *Europa* mixing in Embrace,  
 And boast, how on his Back the Damsel rode,  
 And grasp'd his Horns, unconscious of the God :  
 Of *Cadmus*, the tir'd Heifer, and the Field,  
 That erst was seen an Iron Crop to yield : 330  
 Of Rocks that follow'd when *Amphion* strung  
 His *Theban* Lyre, and dancing Groves they sung.



BOOK VIII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 369

While others celebrate in equal Strains  
*Harmonia*, bound in Hymenæal Chains,  
 Or tune to pregnant *Semele* their Lays : 335  
 None want a Fable for a Theme of Praise.  
 While thus the genial Banquet they prolong  
 In friendly Guise, and urge th' unfinish'd Song,  
 The Son of *Laius*, long conceal'd, forsakes  
 His gloomy Cell, and social Bliss partakes. 340  
 No wonted Filth was on his Visage seen,  
 Unruffled was his Brow, his Look serene.  
 Such Wonder would arise, should *Bacchus* show  
 Barbaric Trophies, and his *Indian* Foe,  
 Brought from the Banks of mix'd *Hydaspes*, grac'd 345  
 With Beds of Gems, and orient Realms laid waste.  
 His Friends' Address with Courtesy he bore,  
 Nor shunn'd their proffer'd Solace as before ;  
 But cleans'd his Cheeks of Gore, approv'd the Food,  
 And Life's long-unexperienc'd Joys renew'd. 350  
 E'en *Oedipus* in Mirth and Converse gay  
 Assum'd a Part, who late was known to pray  
 To *Pluto*, and the Sister-Fiends alone,  
 Or at his Daughter's Feet to pour his Moan.  
 Yet latent was the Cause. The Palm of Fight, 355  
 Gain'd by his Country, gave him no Delight,  
 The War was all he wish'd. To this his Son  
 He spurr'd, nor car'd by whom the Day was won.  
 But first with tacit Vows he view'd the Sword,  
 And all the Seeds of Wickedness explor'd. 360

v. 345. *Hydaspes*] A River that rises in the most northern Part of *India* toward the Mountain *Imaus*, and falls into the *Indus*, in Allusion to which Circumstance, I have given it the Epithet *mix'd*.

Hence smil'd upon his Aspect Peace unknown,  
 And the Feast pleas'd with Merit not its own.  
 Thus *Phineus*, when, his Limbs with Hunger worn,  
 And the last Period of his Torture borne,  
 His Palace freed from Harpies he perceiv'd, 365  
 Incredulous his Rescue disbeliev'd;  
 Then gave a Loose to Joy, as long unstain'd,  
 His Vessels, Beds and costly Board remain'd.  
 Stretch'd in their Tents the *Grecian* Cohorts lay,  
 And lost in Sleep the Labours of the Day : 370  
 All but *Adrastus* ; he, consign'd by Fate  
 To watchful Cares, the Curse of regal State,  
 With Horror heard, unknowing the Repose  
 His Age requir'd, the Revels of his Foes.  
 He sickens at the Trumpet's brazen Sound, 375  
 And Shouts of haughty Triumph that rebound

v. 363. *Thus Phineus, when his Limbs*] *Phineus* was a King of *Arcadia*, who, having at the Instigation of his Queen, put out the Eyes of his Children by a former Wife, was himself struck blind by *Jupiter*, who sent the Harpies to punish him; but directing the *Argonauts* in their Way to *Colchis*, they, in Return, drove away the Harpies. *Valerius Flaccus*, who has expatiated on this Fable in his *Argonautics*, has the following beautiful Lines on *Phineus's* Joy and Astonishment on being delivered from those rapacious Animals.

Ipsæ inter medios. cœu dulcis imagine somni  
 Lætus, ad cblitæ Cereis suspirat honores.

B 5.

v. 373. *With Horror heard*] *Homer* opens the tenth Book of his *Iliad* with a similar Description of the Distress *Agamemnon* labour'd under the Night after his Defeat by the *Trojans*. The following Lines seem to have given our Author the Hint of the six Verses before us.

Τραμίοντο δὲ οἱ Φρίνης ἰνδά  
 "Ἦτοι ὅς τις πιδίον τὸ Τρωϊκὸν ἀδράσει,  
 Θλόμυλ' ἐν πυρὶ παλῶν, πῇ καί ποτε Ἰλίου προῖ,  
 Αὐλῶν, σὺν ἔλ' ὡς τ' ἐσπῆν, ὁμαδὸν τ' ἀδράσαν.

From

BOOK VIII. STATIUS: THEBAID. 371

From ecchoing Rocks. The Pipe augments his Fears,  
 Dwells on his Thoughts, and grates his loathing Ears.  
 Then from his Camp, desponding, he surveys  
 Their wav'ring Torches, and triumphal Blaze. 380  
 Thus when the Fury of the Tempest past,  
 The Vessel drives with an indulgent Blast,  
 Secure, and trusting to the settled Deep,  
 The Mariners refresh their Limbs in Sleep;  
 And all, unmindful of their Office, not, 385  
 Save the pale Master, and his painted God.  
 Now *Sol's* fair Sister, viewing from afar  
 His Coursers yoked, and ready for the Car,  
 (While Ocean roar'd beneath the rushing Day,  
 And reddened with *Aurora's* orient Ray,) 390  
 Collects her Beams, recalls her scatter'd Light,  
 And with her Whip compells the Stars to Flight.  
 When, ever on the public Welfare bent,  
*Adrastus* summon'd to his royal Tent  
 The *Grecian* Peers; the Question in Debate, 395  
 Who should succeed Interpreter of Fate,  
 On whom the Wreaths and Tripods should devolve,  
 And who could best their Oracles resolve.  
 Scarce had they met, when with united Voice  
 On fam'd *Thiodamas* they fix'd their Choice, 400  
 To whom *Amphiarous* oft reveal'd  
 The Mysteries of Heav'n, nor blush'd to yield  
 Invidious of his Art, a Share of Fame,  
 But own'd his Merit, and approv'd his Claim.

v. 386. *And his painted God*] It was a Custom among the Ancients to name their Ships from some particular Gods, whom they looked upon as tutelary Patrons to them, and paint their Images upon the Stern.

Such unexpected Honours much confound 405  
 The Youth, for Modesty as Skill renown'd :  
 With Awe unfeign'd he views the proffer'd Leaves,  
 Mistrusts his Art, and scarce the Charge receives.  
 As when some Youth of royal Blood succeeds  
 To his paternal Crown, and rules the *Medes*, 410  
 (More safe, had Fate prolong'd his Father's Life)  
 With Diffidence he treads the Path of Strife ;  
 Much from th' aspiring Temper of his Peers,  
 And from the Vulgar's headstrong Will he fears,  
 Doubtful with whom his wide Domain to share, 415  
 Whom make a Partner of imperial Care.  
 His slender Grasp, he fears, will ill contain  
 The weighty Sceptre, and his bow sustain,  
 And trembling takes the Courser's Reins in Hand,  
 And huge *Tiara*, Badge of high Command. 420  
 Soon as a Chaplet for his Brow he twin'd,  
 And in a Wreath his flowing Locks confin'd,  
 With Shouts triumphant thro' the Camp he went,  
 And, as a Specimen of his Intent  
 To serve the Public, piously prepares 425  
 Earth to propitiate with due Rites and Pray'rs.  
 Nor useless to the *Greeks* the Scheme appear'd.  
 First then two Altars on the Champaign rear'd,  
 With Turf high-heap'd, and Ever-greens he grac'd,  
 And various Flow'rs, in decent Order plac'd, 430

v. 418. *And his Bow sustain*] The Bow was borne by the *Persian* Kings as an Ensign of Royalty, as we learn from *Dio*, Book 49, who informs us, that the Ambassadors sent by *Mark Anthony* to *Phraates* found him sitting on a Throne of Gold, and playing on his Bow-string with his Fingers, as I think the Words, *την ἰσχυρὰν τοῦ τόξου ψάλλον*, signify.

# BOOK VIII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 373

The Goddess's own Gift. On these he threw,  
 Whate'er the vernal Rays of *Sol* renew  
 On her green Surface : last he pour'd a Bowl  
 Of purest Milk, and thus confirms the whole.  
 O bland Creatress of the Gods above, 435  
 And Men beneath, from whose omnific Love  
 The Woods are clad with Verdure, Rivers flow,  
 And Animals with Life's warm Current glow ;  
 Hail, fairest Part of the material World,  
 From whom arose the Stones by *Pyrrha* hurl'd, 440  
*Promethean* Arts, and Food for human Kind,  
 Improv'd by Change, with various Arts refin'd.  
 Old Ocean rests sustain'd on thy Embrace,  
 Thy wide Extent contains the finny Race,  
 The feather'd Kind, and Savage in his Lair : 445  
 Round thee, the Prop of Worlds, in vacant Air  
 Sublimely pois'd the swift Machine of Heav'n,  
 And the bright Cars by *Sol* and *Luna* driv'n,  
 Whose Lights alternate gild the Star-pav'd Pole,  
 In Motion annual and diurnal roll. 450  
 Canst thou, who, situate in the Midst of Things,  
 And undivided by the Brother-Kings,  
 So many Towns and Nations far and wide,  
 From thy vast Store with Nourishment supply'd,

v. 435. *O bland Creatress*] The Poet has confirmed the Character of *Theodamas* by this beautiful Hymn to the Earth. There is a genuine classical Simplicity in it not without a Mixture of Grandeur that none but *Homer* and *Callimachus* were truly Masters of, except our *Milton*, whose Style and Manner of Hymn-writing approach very near to our Author's.

v. 452. *And undivided*] *Statius* alludes here to the Hemistick in the fifteenth Book of the *Iliad*, where *Neptune*, speaking of the Division of the World between *Jupiter*, *Pluto* and himself, says,

Γαῖα δ' ἔρι ξυμπάσῃσιν.

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Alone and unassisted dost sustain, 455  
 And *Atlas*, who without thee toils in vain  
 Beneath th' Incumbent Atmosphere, his Care,  
 Us only of thy Sons refuse to bear?  
 Why, Goddess, dost thou murmur at our Weight?  
 O say, what Crime has merited thy Hate? 460  
 Is it, because a foreign Birth we boast,  
 The wretched Natives of th' *Inachian* Coast?  
 Our Country lies in ev'ry Tract of Earth:  
 Nor should'st thou these or those, as void of Worth,  
 Mark out for Vengeance, or extraneous call, 465  
 Since thou'rt alike the Mother of us all.  
 Common to all alike may'st thou remain,  
 Nor grudge, that ought but *Thebans* press thy Plain.  
 Still in the Chance of War, and Course of Fate  
 May we expire, not whelm'd thro' sudden Hate 470  
 Snatch not our breathing Bodies, ere they lie  
 On the known Pile, but give us Time to die.  
 Soon shall we come the Path that all must tread,  
 When Destiny has cut the fatal Thread.  
 O stop the moving Field, nor thus prevent 475  
 The Sisters' Hands, but to our Pray'rs relent.  
 But thou, whom dear to Heav'n no *Theban* Hand  
 Depriv'd of vital Breath, nor hostile Brand,  
 But Nature, who prepar'd a Bed of Rest  
 Between her Arms, and snatch'd thee to her Breast, 480  
 As if, in Recompence, she would bestow  
 A Burial-Place on *Cyrrba's* sacred Brow:  
 Conciliate to the Gods thy wretched Friend,  
 And let a Portion of thy Skill descend  
 To guide my Breast. What'er thou didst prepare 485  
 To teach our grieving Host, to me declare.

# BOOK VIII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 375

As thy Interpreter, to thee I'll pay  
 My Vows, in Absence of the God of Day.  
 The Place that snatch'd thee hence, is more divine  
 Than *Cyrrha*, *Delos*, or the God's own Shrine. 490  
 This said, in Earth he plung'd the sable Herd,  
 And Sheep, for their black Fleeces much preferr'd:  
 Then o'er them heap'd the Sand. Such Rites they paid  
 For fun'ral Honours to the Prophet's Shade.  
 Thus toil'd the *Greeks*, when in the brazen Sound 495  
 Of Swords, and martial Horns their Shouts are drown'd.  
 The Queen of Furies from *Theumesus'* Height  
 Her Tresses shook, and rais'd the Din of Fight;  
 She mingled Hissings with the Clarion's Tone,  
 And the Trump breath'd a Clangour yet unknown. 500  
*Cithæron* starts astonish'd, and the Quire  
 Of Tow'rs that danc'd to great *Amphion's* Lyre.  
 Now stern *Bellona* thunders at each Gate,  
 To wake the War, and act the Will of Fate.  
 The sounding Hinges ring, as they unfold: 505  
 The Waves of People to the Passage roll'd,  
 As if the *Grecians* press'd them from behind;  
 Horse mix with Foot, and clashing Chariots join'd.  
 Long in th' entangling Entrance they remain,  
 And view the Field, they strove to reach in vain. 510

- v. 491. *In Earth*] The Ancients always sacrificed black Animals to the Earth: thus *Homer* in the 3d Book of the *Iliad*.

Οἷοντι δ' ἄρ' ἵτιμον λευκόν, ἵτιμον δὲ μέλαινα,  
 Γῆτι καὶ Ἥελίω.

Of which (says the old Scholiast) the white Lamb was sacrificed to the Sun as the Father of Light, and the black one to the Earth, as being the Mother and Nurse of Mankind.

# 376 STATIUS's THEBAID. BOOK VIII.

*Creon* by *Lot* from the *Ogygian* goes ;  
*Neitæ* then *Eteocles* disclose :  
 The *Hamoloides Hæmon* occupies ;  
 Thro' *Hypseus* to the Plain *Prætidæ* flies :  
 Next thro' *Electræ* warlike *Dryas* takes 515  
 His Way ; *Eurymedon Hypsistæ* shakes.  
 The Gate of *Dirce* for a while retards,  
 Then frees the brave *Menæceus* with his Guards.  
 Thus when the *Nile* with Heav'n's descending Show'rs,  
 And eastern Snows retrieves his less'ning Pow'rs, 520  
 Impatient of th' Increase, imbib'd with Force,  
 And foaming o'er he bursts his latent Source,  
 Then disembogues his Burden in the Main,  
 And from sev'n Mouths o'erflows the neighb'ring Plain-  
 While to their Caves the routed Nymphs retreat, 525  
 Nor even dare their native River meet.  
 Mean while th' *Inachian* Youths, and *Spartan* Bands  
 With those who cultivate *Elean* Lands,

v. 511. *From the Ogygian*] *Lastantius* in his Notes on our Author, esteems this dull Enumeration of the *Theban* Gates as a striking Elegancy : but, I confess, I fear it is Folly to have translated it. Dry, however, and uninteresting as it is, I doubt not but there are many Lovers of Antiquity, who extoll *Statius* to the Skies for having handed down to Posterity such a considerable Piece of useful Knowledge. All I request of the Reader with Respect to it is, that he will not blame the Dullness of the Translator, since he could not have been faithful to the Original without being so.

v. 519. *Thus when*] The Poet has in this Comparison descended to the Minutizæ of Exactness ; but the Delicacy of the Allusion, which may possibly escape the Observation of the Generality of our Readers, is the Correspondence of the seven Mouths of the *Nile* to the seven Gates of *Thebes* : for as each of the former discharges a Torrent of Water, so from each of the latter a Band of Warriors issues to the Field of Combat.



# BOOK VIII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 377

And *Pylas*, seek the Battle. sadly slow,  
 And drooping with the Weight of recent Woe; 530  
 Nor willing yet *Thiodamas* obey,  
 Depriv'd of their late Prophet's gentle Sway.  
 Nor, Prince of Augurs, does thy Cohort boast  
 Alone of thee : the universal Host  
 Defective seems, as thro' the Wings of Fight 535  
 Thy Successor appears excell'd in Height.  
 Thus should some envious Cloud secrete a Star  
 From the fair Groupe that forms the northern Car,  
 Short of its Complement, the mangled Wain  
 Would scarce be known, and Seamen gaze in vain. 540  
 But see ! fresh Labours to the Poet rise,  
 And War unsung demands the God's Supplies :  
 Another *Phæbus* then attune my Lyre,  
 A greater Muse the growing Song inspire.  
 The fatal Hour arrives so rashly sought, 545  
 With Horror, Sorrow, Blood and Carnage fraught ;

v. 537. *Thus should*] This Simile likewise has all the Precision and Justness of the former : the seven Captains being represented by the seven Stars in Charles's Wain.

v. 541. *But see ! fresh Labours*] *Statius* is not the only Author who has renewed his Invocation to the Deities who preside over Poetry, at the Middle of his Book, when he is going to enter upon a different Subject.

Nunc age, qui reges, Erato, &c.

Tu vatem, tu diva mone : &c.

Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo,

Majus opus moveo.

*Virgil, Æn. Lib. 7.*

And *Milton* likewise ;

Descend from Heav'n, *Urania*, &c.

Half yet remains unsung, &c.

*Par. Lost, B. 7.*

# 378 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK VIII.

And Death, from Chains and ~~Syrian~~ Darkneſs freed,  
 Enjoys the Light, and ſtalking o'er the Mead,  
 Expands his Jaws, and to his Arms invites  
 The Men of Worth, but vulgar Triumphs ſights. 550  
 He marks the Chiefs who moſt deſerve their Life,  
 The firſt in Arms, and foremoſt in the Strife;  
 Of theſe, ſcarce number'd with the mighty dead,  
 The Fiends rapacious ſnatch the vital Thread.  
 Mars occupies the Centre of the Field, 555  
 His Javelin dry; where'er he turns his Shield,  
 The fatal Touch crazes from the Mind  
 Wives, Children, Home, and leaves a Blank behind.  
 The Love of Life too flies among the reſt,  
 The laſt that lingers in the human Breſt. 560  
 Wrath ſits ſuſpended on their thirſty Spears,  
 And half unſheath'd each angry Blade appears.  
 Their Helmets tremble, formidably gay  
 With nodding Creſts, and ſhed a gleamy Ray:  
 Loud beat their daring Hearts againſt the Mails: 565  
 Nor wonder we, with Men the God prevails;  
 The very Steeds with warlike Ardour glow,  
 And ſnow-white Show'rs of Foam the Plain o'erflow.  
 They champ the Bit, or neighing paw the Ground,  
 And bound and prance at the ſhrill Trumpet's Sound,  
 As if their Rider's Soul transfus'd inſpires 571  
 Their Breſts with equal and congenial Fires.

v. 347. *And Death*] We are here dazled and confounded with a Variety of Scenes, and Complication of Imagery. What can be more grand and magnificent than the Prelude to this Battle. We ſee Death let looſe from Hell, and ſtriding with open Mouth over the Field, Mars ſpiriting the Soldiers, and with the Touch of his Shield infuſing a Forgetfulneſs of all domeſtic Connections, and the very Horſes ſeemingly voluntary in their Maſter's Service.

When

# BOOK VIII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 379

When now they rush, thick Clouds of Dust arise  
 From either Part encountring in the Skies.  
 As they advance, the middle Space between 575  
 Grows less, till scarce an Interval is seen.  
 Now Front to Front oppos'd in just Array,  
 The closing Hosts with Groans commence the Fray:  
 Sword is repell'd by Sword, Shields clash on Shields,  
 Foot presses Foot, and Lance to Lances yields. 580  
 Their Helmets almost join, and mingling Rays,  
 Alternately reflect each other's Blaze.  
 Beauteous as yet the Face of War appears,  
 No Helms uncrested, and no broken Spears;  
 Without a Flaw the deepning Lines remain, 585  
 Their Belts and Bucklers shine without a Stain:  
 Fair hung the Quiver at the Warrior's Side;  
 Nor did one Chariot stand without a Guide.  
 But when stern Valour, prodigal of Life,  
 And Wrath arose, increasing with the Strife, 590

v. 575. *As they advance, the middle*] These are good Lines, though I cannot think them equal to the following.

————— For now  
 'Twixt Host and Host a narrow Space was left,  
 A dreadful Interval, and Front to Front  
 Presented stood in terrible Array  
 Of hideous Length:

*Par. Lost, B. 6. 103.*

v. 579. *Sword is*] The Lines in the Original, viz.

Jam clypeus clypeis, umbone repellitur umbo,  
 Ense minax ensis, pede pes & cuspidē cuspis.

Are imitated (says Mr. Pope) very happily from the following Lines in the fourth Book of the *Iliad*, Verse 446.

Οἱ δ' ἔτι δὴ δὲ ἐς χθρὸν ἔτι ξυστάς ἔκαστο.  
 Σὺν ἰΐσταλον ἰσὺς, σὺν δ' ἄγχισα, ἔ μιν εἴδμεν  
 Χαλκιοδάμνητον ἀτὰρ Ἀσπίδος ἐμφαλίστατον  
 Ἐπλην τ' ἀνάλαντι

### 380 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK VIII.

Darts thrown aloft with swift Succession glare,  
 Glow in the Whirl, and hiss along the Air :  
 A Cloud of Arrows intercepts the Skies,  
 Scarce can the crowded Heav'ns for more suffice.  
 Not with such Force the flaky Sheets of Snow 595  
 Descend on *Rhodope's* ærial Brow :  
 Great was the Crash, as when from either Pole  
*Jove* bares his Arm, and bids the Thunder roll :  
 Thus roars the Storm when gloomy *Boreas* pours  
 The Hail on *Lybian* Sands in rattling Show'rs. 600  
 Some fall by sent, some by returning Spears,  
 And present Death in various Forms appears,  
 With Stakes, in Lieu of Javelins, they engage,  
 And mutual Blows are dealt with mutual Rage.  
 Their whizzing Slings a stony Tempest rain ; 605  
 The Bullets flash, like Lightning, o'er the Plain.  
 A double Fate is lodg'd in ev'ry Dart,  
 And, the Steel failing, Poison saps the Heart.  
 No random Weapons fly without a Wound ;  
 The Press so thick, they cannot reach the Ground. 610  
 Oft ignorant they kill, and fall in Fight,  
 And Fortune does the Work of val'rous Might.  
 They gain and lose with swift Vicissitude  
 The well-fought Ground, pursuing and pursu'd.

v. 594. *Not with such Force*] The Reader may compare this with the following, quoted from *Virgil's Æneid*, Book 9. Verse 668.

Quantus ab occasu veniens pluvialibus hædis  
 Verberat imber humum : quam multâ grandine nimbi  
 In vada præcipitant cum Jupiter horridus austris  
 Torquet aquosam hyemem, & cælo cava nubila rumpit.

BOOK VIII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 381

As when great *Jove* of adverse Winds and Storms, 615  
To vex the World, a double Tempest forms ;  
The Skies and Surges waver with the Blast,  
Which then prevails, and still obey the last ;  
Till the light Clouds with driving *Auster* sweep,  
Or stronger *Boreas* rules the wat'ry Deep. 620

*Asopian Hyppseus* first the Slaughter led,  
And slew *Menalcas* at his People's Head,  
Th' *Oebalians* proud ; who, wedg'd in firm Array  
With close-compacted Shields, had forc'd their Way  
Thro' the *Eubæan* Ranks : their mightiest slain, 625  
They swerv'd aside and forrowing quit the Plain.  
He, a rough Native of the rapid Flood,  
A *Spartan* both in Nature and by Blood,  
Back thro' his Bowels drew the thrilling Dart,  
That quiver'd in his Bosom near his Heart, 630  
(Left in his Back by sinking deeper found,  
His Troops should deem it a dishonest Wound.)  
Then at his Foe the Weapon faintly threw,  
The bloody Weapon unavailing flew.  
Here end the rural Sports of the deceas'd, 635  
His Wars, and Stripes that erst his Mother pleas'd.

v. 615.. *As when great Jove*] So *Silius Italicus*, L. 4.

*Hæc pontum vice (ubi exercet discordia ventos)*  
*Fert Boreas, Euræusque refert, molemque profundi,*  
*Nunc huc alterno, nunc illuc flamine gestant.*

v. 636. *And Stripes that erst his Mother pleas'd*] *Orestes* having transported the Image of *Diana* from *Scythia* into *Sparta*, and that Goddess being only placable with human Blood, lest the divine Vengeance should be incurred by an Intermision of Sacrifice, and that their Cruelty might not excite the *Greeks* to a Rebellion, they inured their Children to undergo a severe Scourging with a Kind of emulous Patience and Fortitude, till the Blood gushed out in such a Quantity as might appease the cruel Goddess. *Tertullian* in his Poem to his Lives of the Martyrs gives much the same Account:

At *Phœdimus Amyntas* lifts his Bow ;

When (ah ! how swift the Sisters wing the Blow)

Supine the Chief lies panting on the Ground,

Ere the recoiling String had ceas'd to found. 640

On *Phœteus* next a forceful Stroke descends,

And his right Arm from off the Shoulder rends.

Long trembling on the Pain the Member lay'd,

Nor from its faithful Grasp dismiss'd the Blade ;

*Acetes* view'd with Horror, as it lay 645

'Midst other Arms, and lopp'd the Hand away.

Stern *Atbamus* his furious Lance impell'd

At *Ipbis*, angry *Phœres Abas* fell'd ;

The Sword of savage *Hypsæus Argus* found :

They lay, lamenting each a different Wound. 650

Rapt in a Chariot, *Abas* fought the Mead ;

*Argus* on Foot : but *Ipbis* rein'd a Steed.

Two *Theban* Twins together rang'd the Field,

In Casques, the fatal Mask of War, conceal'd ;

These, as along the Paths of Fight they sped, 655

Two Twins of *Argos* mingled with the dead :

But when each kindred Feature they descri'd,

As to despoil them of their Arms they try'd ;

- Nam quod hodie apud Lacedæmonios solennitas maxima est  
 • *Διαιμασμός* [i. e. Flagellatio] non haret. In quo sacro ante aram  
 • nobiles quique adolescentes flagellis affliguntur astantibus paren-  
 • tibus & propinquis & uti perseverent adhortantibus :

v. 637. At *Phœdimus*] As the perpetual Horror of Combats and a Succession of Images of Slaughter could not but tire the Reader in the Course of a long Work, *Statius* has endeavoured to remedy this Defect by a constant Variety in the Deaths of his Heroes. These he distinguishes several Ways : sometimes by the Characters of the Men, their Age, Office, Profession, Nation and Family, sometimes by the Difference of their Wounds, and at others by the several Postures and Attitudes in which his Warriors are described either falling or fighting.

They gaze upon each other, and bemoan  
 The cruel Lot, that soon may be their own. 660  
 Unhappy *Daphnis* by fierce *Ion* bleeds,  
 Who took Advantage of his headstrong Steeds:  
*Jove* smiles in Triumph, *Phabus* mourns in vain;  
 This dwelt at *Pisa*, that on *Cyrra*'s Plain.  
 Two Chiefs above the rest were mark'd with Fame; 665  
 By Fortune, Heroes of distinguish'd Name;  
 Fierce *Hemon* chac'd the *Grecians* o'er the Field,  
 The *Theban* Troops to raging *Tydeus* yield:  
 In him *Achides* gen'rous Heart instills,  
 Him *Pallas* fires,—Thus from their echoing Hills 670

v. 670. *Thus from their echoing Hills*;} I shall take this Opportunity of presenting my Readers with three very fine Similies from three different Authors; the last of which is perhaps as pompous, copious, picturesque, nor to say every Way poetical, as ever was drawn from this Part of the Creation.

Ut torrens celsi præceps è vertice Pindi  
 Cum sonitu ruit ad campum, magnoque furore  
 Convulsum montis volvitur latus, obvia passim  
 Armenta, immanesque ferae, sylvasque trahuntur.  
 Spumæ saxosis clamar convallibus unda.

*Silius Italicus de Bello Punico, Lib. 4.*

Con quel furor, che'l re de fiumi altiero,  
 Quando rompe tal volta argini e sponde,  
 E che nei campi Otnei s' apre il sentiero,  
 Ei grassî solchi, e le biade feconde,  
 E con le sue Capanne il gregge intiero,  
 E coi cani il pastor porta nell' onde.

*Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, Canto 40.*

Comme un voit un Torrent du haut des Pyrénées,  
 Menacer des vallons les nymphes consternées;  
 Cent digues qu'on oppose à ses flots orageux,  
 Soutiennent quelque temps son choc impetueux  
 Mas bientôt renversant sa Barrière impuissante,  
 Il porte au loin le bruit, la mort, & l'épouvante;  
 Deracine en passant ces chènes orgueilleux.  
 Qui bravoient les hivers, & qui touchoient les cieux.

Two Torrents rush, increas'd with wintry Rains,  
 And pour a double Ruin on the Plains,  
 Contending, who should highest overflow  
 The Bridge, or soonest lay the Forest low ;  
 Till some strait Vale unites their watry Force, 675  
 And joins their Streams in one continu'd Course ;  
 Then, Ocean near, they labour to disjoin  
 Their Currents, ere they mingle with the Brine.  
 Bold *Idas* issu'd thro' the middle Fight,  
 And wav'd a Torch that shed a smoaky Light : 680  
 The Warrior's Frolic struck his Foes with Fear ;  
 They shun'd his Sight, and left the Passage clear :  
 But *Tydeus*' Lance pursu'd him, as he sped,  
 Tore off his Helm, and pierc'd his naked Head.  
 Supine the Giant lay, the barbed Spear 685  
 Stands fix'd upon his Forehead. Round his Ear,  
 And Temple swift the curling Flames arise,  
 When *Tydeus* thus in Triumph boasting cries.  
 O call not *Argos* cruel in Return  
 For this thy fun'ral Pile ; in Quiet burn. 690  
 As the gaunt Wolf, pleas'd with the first Essay  
 Of Slaughter, flies, uncloy'd to make a Prey

Detache les rochers du pendant des montagnes,  
 Et poursuit les troupeaux fuyant dans les campagnes.

*Voltaire's Henri. Chant. 6.*

v. 691. *As the gaunt Wolf*] *Tasso* has paraphrased this.

Come dal chiuso ovil cacciato viene  
 Lupo tal'or, che fugge, e si nasconde ;  
 Che se ben del gran ventre omai ripiene  
 Ha l'ingorde voragine profonde.  
 Avido pur di fanguo anco fuor tiene  
 La lingua, e'el fugge dalla labra immonde ;  
 Tal'ei sen gia dopo il sanguigno Stratio  
 Della sua cupa fame anco non satio.

*Cieur. Lib. Canto 10. Stanza 2.*



BOOK VIII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 385

Of the whole Flock. Thus rush'd the vengeful Son  
 Of *Oeneus* to compleat the Task begun.  
 Brave *Aon* perish'd by a well-aim'd Stone ; 695  
 His Sword hew'd *Pholus* and bold *Cbremis* down.  
 The Sons of *Mera* sunk to nether Night  
 Beneath his piercing Dart, whom in Despite  
 Of *Venus*, once her Patroness, she bare :  
 Mean Time the Matron wearies Heav'n with Pray'r.  
 Nor with less Wrath insatiate *Hæmon* glows, 701  
 But dies the Ground with Purple as he goes ;  
 In ev'ry Quarter of the Field engag'd,  
 But mostly where the thickest Combate rag'd.  
 At length as on he sped, tho' short of Breath, 705  
 Yet still unwearied with the Work of Death ;  
 He falls on *Butes*, who address'd his Host  
 To dare the threatned Shock, nor quit their Post :  
 On the fair Youth, unknowing whence it came,  
 Descends the Pole-Ax with unerring Aim, 710  
 And cleaves his Temples, grac'd with youthful Charms ;  
 His Locks divided fall upon his Arms.  
 The crimson Life gush'd upward from the Wound ;  
 Prone falls the Chief, and falling spurns the Ground.  
*Polites* then beneath his Falchion bow'd, 715  
 And *Hypanis*, who long unshorn had vow'd

v. 716. *Who long unshorn had vow'd*] Their letting their Hair grow to a great Length, and dedicating it to the Gods was esteemed a principal Act of Religion by the Ancients. Thus we find *Achilles* consecrated his Hair to the River *Spercheus* in Order to procure himself and Friend a safe Return from *Troy*.

Ἐν αὖτ' ἄλλ' εὐχόσσι ποδάρεος δι' Ἀχαιεύς,  
 Στασ' ἀπάνευθε πυρῆς ξανθὴν ἀπικέλευτο χεῖρ' αὖ,  
 ἔην ἰα Σπέρχεια ποταμῷ τρίφι τειλεδόντων.

Their Hair to *Bacchus*, and the God of Day :  
 Yet neither came to drive the Pest away.  
 To these the Warrior *Hyperenor* join'd,  
 And *Damafus*, who fain would have declin'd, 720  
 Th' unequal Conflict; but the Spear he threw,  
 Athwart his Breast, and thro' his Shoulders flew;  
 From his tenacious Grasp the Buckler tore,  
 And on its Point in seeming Triumph bore.  
 Much more had *Hæmon* too that Day atchiev'd, 725  
 The Pow'r assisting; but *Minerva* griev'd  
 For her slain *Greeks*, and to his Wrath oppos'd  
*Oenides*.—Now the God and Goddess clos'd  
 In Converse mutual, when *Alcmene's* Son,  
 Peace at his Heart, serenely thus begun. 730  
 Say, faithful Sister, by what Fortune driv'n,  
 We meet in Battle? has the Queen of Heav'n,  
 For ever studious in promoting Ill,  
 Devis'd this Scheme?—whatever is thy Will,  
 Let that be done: much sooner I'd withstand 735  
 The Wrath of Heav'n, and brave the Thund'rer's  
 Hand.

Dear as my *Hæmon* is, him I disown,  
 If *Pallas* favours Heroes of her own.  
 No more with thee in any Mortal's Cause  
 I combate, tho' thy favour'd *Tydeus* draws 740  
 On *Hyllus*, or should menace with his Spear  
*Amphitryon*, recent from the nether Sphere.  
 Fresh in my Mind thy Favours I retain;  
 How oft (when o'er the spacious Earth and Main

v. 741. On *Hyllus*] *Hyllus* and *Amphitryon* were his Sons by *Omphale*.

v. 743. Fresh in my Mind thy Favours:] In the eighth Book of the *Iliad*,

I roam'd) that Hand upheld 'me in the Fray, 745  
 And *Jove's* own *Aegis* gave my Arm the Day.  
 With me the Realms of *Styx* thou hadst explor'd,  
 Could *Acheron* to Gods Access afford.  
 To thee my Rank and Place in Heav'n I owe,  
 My Sire, and more than I can utter now. 750  
 Then act thy Will on *Thebes*,—To thee I yield  
 The sole Command, and Guidance of the Field.  
 This said, he strode away.—His Words assuage  
 The Wrath of *Pallas*, and appease her Rage.  
 Her Anger past, the wonted Smiles return; 755  
 The Snakes subside, her Eyes desist to burn:  
 The Warrior, conscious that the God retir'd,  
 No more with Strength endu'd, with Ardour fir'd,  
 With faint Effort whirls round his useless Brand,  
 Nor in one Stroke descries his Patron's Hand. 760  
 Would Pride and Shame permit, he fain would fly:  
 He blushes to retreat, yet fears to die.  
*Oenides* urges his retreating Foe;  
 And brandishing what no one else could throw,  
 Directs His Arm, where 'twixt his Helm and Shield,  
 The joining Throat and Neck a Passage yield. 766  
 Nor err'd his Hand, but *Pallas* chose to spare  
 The hapless Youth, and made his Life her Care.

*Iliad*, *Pallas* mentions *Jove's* Ingratitude in not rewarding her for the Services she had done his Son *Hercules* at his Request, when distressed by the Artifice of *Juno*.

v. 756. *The Snakes subside*] The Poet must here allude to the Snakes on *Medusa's* Head, depicted 'on *Jupiter's Aegis*, which *Pallas* generally carried about her.

Ἄμφι δ' ἄρ' ἄμοισιν βάλλει λίγδα ποσειδείων  
 Δεινῶ, ἣν αἶψ' ἔκ' πάντα φίτα ἱερφάνετο.

Ἐν δ' ἔστι, ὅς δ' ἀλκή, ὅς δ' ἐκρύβασα ἰακή.

Ἐν δὲ τι Γοργῶν κεφαλῇ δεινοῖο πλάγῃ. *Iliad* 5: Ver. 738.

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The Dart, diverted from its destin'd Course,  
His Shoulder graz'd, and spent in Air its Force. 770  
A Fate so near him chills his Soul with Dread;  
At once his Fortitude and Vigour fled.

No more he dares prolong th' unequal Fight,  
But even sickens at the Hero's Sight.

Thus; when some Hunter's Spear has drawn the Gore  
From the tough Forehead of a bristled Boar, 776

But lightly raz'd the Skin, nor reach'd the Brain;

The daunted Savage wheels around with Pain,  
Grinding his Tusks, or stands aloof thro' Fear,

Nor tempts again the Fury of his Spear. 780

Long had brave *Protobus* with unerring Hand  
Dealt out his Shafts, and gall'd the *Grecian* Band.

This *Tydeus* saw, and rushing at the Foe

And his gay Courser aim'd a double Blow.

On him, as prone he tumbles on the Plains, 785

Falls the pierc'd Steed, and, while he seeks the Reins,

Stamps on the Helm', till by his Feet compress'd

On his Lord's Face, it crush'd his shielded Breast;

Then spouting out amidst a purple Tide

The Bit, expir'd recumbent at his Side. 790

Thus often on the Cloud-supporting Crown

Of *Gaurus*, Vine and Helm are both o'erthrown,

A double Damage to the Swain: but most

Th' uxorious Elm bewails his Consort lost;

Nor groans so much for his own hapless Fate, 795

As for the Grapes he presses with his Weight.

*Cborabus*, Comrade of the Nine, forfook

His native Mount, and the *Castalian* Brook;

Though oft *Urania* from th' inspected Stars 799

Forewarn'd his Death, and bade him shun the Wars:

Heedless he mixes with the daring Throng,  
 And, while he meditates the future Song,  
 Becomes himself a Theme of public Praise.  
 The Sisters weep, forgetful of their Lays.  
 Swol'n with ambitious Hopes, young *Atys* came 805  
 From *Phocian Cyrrba* to the Field of Fame,  
 To fair *Ismene* from his tender Age  
 Espous'd; nor did her Father's impious Rage,  
 Or the neglected Beauties of her Face,  
 The Idol Fair-One in his Eyes disgrace. 810  
 Nor in her Turn the Damsel disproves,  
 His faultless Person; mutual were their Loves.  
 But War forbids their Nuptials; hence arose  
 The Champion's Hatred to his *Argive* Foes.  
 He shines the foremost in the deathful Scene, 815  
 And lab'ring to be notic'd by his Queen,  
 Now wars on Foot, and now with loosen'd Reins,  
 And foaming Horses pours along the Plains.  
 His doating Mother deck'd his am'rous Breast,  
 And graceful Shoulders with a purple Vest. 820  
 His Arms and Trappings were emboss'd with Gold,  
 Lest he should seem less glorious to behold  
 Than his fair Spouse.—On these the Chief rely'd,  
 And the stern *Greeks* to single Fight defy'd.  
 The weakest of his Enemies subdu'd, 825  
 And none attack'd, who were not first pursu'd,  
 Trembling he bears their Trophies to his Train,  
 And with his Troops, inglorious, herds again.

v. 827. *He bears the Trophies*] This Passage gives us an Insight  
 into the antient Method of fighting. We see the Leaders advancing  
 before their Troops and making an Excursion, and soon as they  
 had obtained the Spoils of the vanquished, returning to them again.  
 If this Passage is attended to, it will clear up many Things in *Ho-*  
mer,

Thus the young Lion in the *Caspian* Shade,  
 (No Length of Mane terrific yet display'd) 830  
 Yet innocent of slaughter'd Bull or Ram,  
 If chance he lights upon a straggling Lamb  
 Without the Fold, in Absence of the Swain,  
 Riots in Blood, and glories in the slain.  
 On *Tydeus* then unknown he casts his Eyes, 835  
 And measuring his Valour by his Size,  
 Proudly presumes to make an easy Prey  
 Of the slain Chief, and bear his Arms away.  
 He now had levell'd many a distant Blow,  
 Ere the brave Prince perceiv'd his puny Foe : 840  
 At length contemptuously he view'd the Man,  
 And formidably smiling thus began.  
 I see, vain Fop, too prodigal of Breath,  
 Thou seekest Honour from a glorious Death.  
 He paus'd : nor deigning to discharge a Blow 845  
 With Sword or Spear on such a worthless Foe,  
 His Arm scarce rais'd, a slender Javelin threw,  
 With fatal Certainty the Weapon flew ;  
 And, as if driven with his utmost Force,  
 Deep in his Groin infix'd, there stopt its Course. 850

*mer*, and his Imitators, which would otherwise seem very absurd.  
 ——— *Alys* would have made a good Hero in a Romance. He was  
 one of those Gentlemen who go to War only to please the Ladies,  
 and mix the Beau with the Hero, two Characters the most incon-  
 sistent in Nature, though often united in Practice. Whilst however  
 we are pitying the rash and ill-timed Gallantry of this young Man,  
 we cannot but applaud the rough Soldier-like Behaviour of *Tydeus*,  
 and the blunt Wit he shews on this Occasion. I shall only observe  
 farther, that this Character is admirably well supported, and is a  
 sufficient Proof of our Author's Vein for Satire. — The former  
 Part of this Note belongs to *Barthius*.

The Chief of Life thus seemingly bereft,  
 The gen'rous Victor passes on, and left  
 His Arms untouch'd, and thus jocosely said.  
 These suit not *Mars*, nor thee, O fav'ring Maid :  
 What Man of Courage would not blush to wear 855  
 Such gaudy Trifles ?—nay, I scarce would dare  
 Present them, by my Consort to be borne,  
 Lest she reject them with indignant Scorn.  
 Thus spake *Oenides*, fir'd with Lust of Fame,  
 And sallies forth in quest of nobler Game. 860  
 Thus, when the Lion roams, where Heifers feed,  
 And lowing Beeves expatiate o'er the Mead,  
 The royal Savage traversing the Plain  
 In sullen Majesty, and sour Disdain,  
 Spares the weak Herd, and culling out their Head,  
 Some lordly Bull, arrests and lays him dead. 866  
*Menæceus*, list'ning to the dying Cries  
 Of *Alys*, swiftly to his Rescue flies ;  
 And lest his Steeds should flag, deserts his Car,  
 And bounds impetuous thro' the Ranks of War. 870

v. 861. *Thus when the Lion*] In Order to obviate any Objection that may arise to the frequent Repetition of Similies drawn from the same Object, I shall transcribe Mr, *Pope's* Defence of *Homer* on that Point.—' Is it not more reasonable to compare the same Man always to the same Animal, than to see him sometimes a Sun, sometimes a Tree, and sometimes a River? though *Homer* speaks of the same Creature, he so diversifies the Circumstances and Accidents of the Comparisons, that they always appear quite different. And to say Truth, it is not so much the Animal or the Thing, as the Action or Posture of them that employs our Imagination: two different Animals in the same Action are more like each other than one and the same Animal is to himself in two different Actions. And those who in reading *Homer* are shocked that 'tis always a Lion, may as well be angry that it is always a Man.' See Essay on *Homer's* Battles.

Th' *Arcadian* Youths advanc'd to strip the Slain ;  
 Nor did the *Thebans* labour to restrain,  
 Till brave *Menæceus* thus :—O foul Disgrace  
 To boasted *Cadmus* ! O degen'rate Race !  
 Shall foreign *Atys* gain deserv'd Applause 875  
 By nobly bleeding in another's Cause,  
 While we decline the Danger of the Day,  
 And Children, Wives, and all that's dear betray ?  
 Each tender Care reviv'd, the Troops arise,  
 Shame in their Breasts, and Anger in their Eyes. 880  
 Mean while the *Theban* Princesses, a Pair  
 Alike in Manners, and supremely fair,  
 Retiring to their Chambers, give a Vent  
 To mutual Grief, and mutual Discontent :  
 Nor do they weep the present Ills of Fate, 885  
 But from the earliest *Æra* of their State  
 Seek Matter of Complaint : one mourns her Sire,  
 And one the Mother Queen's incestuous Fire ;  
 This weeps her absent Brother's baneful Stars,  
 The Monarch that, but both detest the Wars. 890  
 Their Vows suspended by an equal Love,  
 They fondly pity whom they can't approve,

v. 873. *O foul Disgrace*] This little Exhortation of *Menæceus* to his Soldiers is at once concise and pithy. A longer Speech at this Juncture would have been very absurd. He has said all that was wanted, and nothing but what he ought. It is something like that comprehensive Harangue of the great *Gustavus*. 'Look ye at those Fellows ; either sell them, or they'll sell you.'—It is remarked of *Homer*, that his longest Orations are such as were delivered in the Heat of Battle, a Fault which none can accuse our Author of without manifest Injustice.

v. 891. *Their Vows suspended*] This recalls to my Remembrance four beautiful Lines from *Seneca* the Tragedian, who, in his *Thebais*, introduces *Jocasta* speaking as follows.

Utramque quamvis diligam affectu pari,



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And doubt, whom they had rather have prevail :  
At length the favour'd Exile sinks the Scale.

Thus *Pandionian* Birds, when they regain 895

Their native Clime in Winter's dreary Reign,  
Perch'd on their Nests, in plaintive Accents tell,

And hear what various Accidents befell

Each other absent, and by Turns rejoice

In Notes, that emulate the human Voice. 900

Tears making Way, the chaste *Ismene* broke

Her Silence first, and thus, exclaiming, spoke.

O Sister ! what deluding Errors blind,

And mock the easy Faith of Human-kind !

When Images, in Dreams returning, play 905

Before our Eyes, distinct as in the Day ;

And Sleep is mark'd by Care : for Yester-night

My Fancy labour'd with the sudden Sight

Of Nuptials, which in Peace were never fought,

Nor enter'd in my most unguarded Thought. 910

The Bridegroom too among the rest was shown,

Scarce known in Person : once indeed I own

Quo causa melior forsque deterior tradit,

Inclinat animus, semper infirmo favens

Miseros magis fortuna conciliat suis.

Though by the bye the Poet seems to contradict what he said before, viz. that *Antigone* preferred *Polynices* in her Esteem.

v. 895. Thus *Pandionian Birds*, when] *Statius* is not the first Poet who has likened the Chattering of Women to the Chirping of Birds. *Virgil* in his *Æneid* compares the loquacious *Juturna* to one of them.

Nigra velut magnas Domini cum divitis ædes

Pervolat, & pennis alta atria lustrat hirundo,

Pabula parva legens, nidisque loquacibus escas :

Et nunc porticibus vacuis, nunc humida circum

Stagna sonat.

Lib. 12. Verse 473.

I saw him, when my Marriage was propos'd,  
 At Court.—But soon the glitt'ring Scene was clos'd.  
 The Fires extinguish'd suddenly I view'd, 915  
 And Omens and Prognostics dire ensu'd.  
 My Mother follow'd then, with Fury fir'd,  
 And *Atys* at my Hands with Shouts requir'd.  
 What mean these dark Portents of Death obscure?  
 I fear not, while our House is thus secure, 920  
 While the Foe stands aloof, and Hope remains,  
 Fraternal Concord may reward our Pains.  
 While thus each other's Sorrows they report,  
 A sudden Tumult fills the spacious Court;  
 And *Atys* enters (moving Scene of Woe) 925  
 By Toil and Sweat recover'd from the Foe.  
 Life's ebbing Stream ran trickling on the Ground,  
 One feeble Hand reclin'd upon the Wound,  
 And his loose Hairs his bloodless Face conceal'd,  
 His languid Neck dependent on the Shield. 930  
*Jocasta* first the killing Object ey'd,  
 And trembling call'd his fair intended Bride.  
 This he requests, that with his dying Voice,  
 And last Farewell he may confirm his Choice.  
 Her Name alone, a pleasing Sound, long hung 935  
 On his pale Lips, and trembled on his Tongue.

v. 923. *While thus*] This Description of the Distress of the two Lovers is beyond all the Encomiums that can be given it; though the Grief of *Ismene* on this Occasion is not so outrageous, as if she had not been prepared for it by a previous Dream. The dying Warrior is very artfully introduced, his Condition and Appearances are very picturesque, and the Effects of his violent Passion finely imagined, though at the same Time very natural.

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The Servants shriek, the Virgin with her Hands  
 Conceals her Blushes : Modesty commands.  
 The Queen, indulgent to th' intreating Chief,  
 Constrains her to impart this last Relief. 940  
 Thrice at her Name he lifts her drooping Head,  
 And thrice sinks back, his vital Spirits fled.  
 On her, the Light of Heav'n no more enjoy'd,  
 He feasts his Eyes, admiring and uncloy'd.  
 No Parents near to rear the sacred Pyre, 945  
 Nor frantic Mother, or desponding Sire ;  
 To her th' ungrateful Office they assign,  
 To tend his Obsequies and Rites divine.  
 There, no one present, o'er the Corse she sighs,  
 Closes each Wound, and seals her Lover's Eyes. 950  
 Mean while *Bellona* wak'd anew the Fray,  
 And turn'd the doubtful Fortune of the Day :  
 She chang'd her Torch, and other Serpents wore,  
 Heap'd slain on slain, and swell'd the Stream of Gore,  
 As if the Toil of Fight was scarce begun, 955  
 Much Work of Death remaining to be done.  
 But *Tydeus* shines the most ; tho' fure to wound  
*Partenopæus* deals his Shafts around,

v. 957. *But Tydeus shines the most*] The Picture of *Tydeus* in the following Lines is very elaborately drawn. As his Fate is near at Hand, the Poet endeavours to make him quit the Stage with Honour, and immortalize him in his Verses. Accordingly this being the last Scene he is to appear in, he is ushered in with the greatest Pomp ; and lest there should be any Doubt of his Superiority, after having been compared to the King of Beasts, he is represented by the Eagle, King of Birds. The Poet by this Accumulation of Similies raises our Ideas of his Hero much higher than any simple Description can reach.

Tho' fierce *Hippomedon* impells his Horse  
 Thro' the gor'd War, and crushes many a Corse, 960  
 And *Capaneus*'s Javelin wings its Flight,  
 Afar distinguish'd in the Ranks of Fight,  
 His was the Day : before him trembling flies  
 The *Theban* Herd, as thus aloud he cries.  
 Why this Retreat, when unreveng'd remain 965  
 Your valiant Comrades, late in Ambush slain ?  
 Behold the Man, by whom alone they bled :  
 Behold, and wreak on his devoted Head  
 Your Wrath collected.—Can ye thus forego  
 The Chance of War, and spare the present Foe ? 970  
 Is there a Man, whom this wide-wasting Steel  
 Has wrong'd, for Vengeance let him here appeal.  
 Now by my Soul it grieves me, that content  
 With fifty Deaths, my Course I backward bent  
 To fair *Mycenæ*.—Fly then, but this Day 975  
 The proud Usurper for your Flight shall pay.  
 Scarce had he spoke, when on the left he spy'd  
 The King, conspicuous for his plummy Pride,  
 Rallying his routed Forces.—At the View  
 The kindling Hero to th' Encounter flew, 980  
 As on a Swan the royal Eagle springs  
 With swift Descent, and shades him with his Wings.

v. 981. *As on a Swan*] This Comparison is very minutely copied from *Homer*, as may be seen from the Circumstance of the Shadowing of the Eagle's Wings.

So the strong Eagle from his airy Height,  
 Who marks the Swan's or Crane's embodied Flight,  
 Stoops down impetuous, as they light for Food,  
 And stooping, darkens with his Wings the Flood.

*Pope's Iliad.*

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Then thus.—O Monarch, studious of the Right,  
 Meet we thus fairly by *Apollo's* Light ?  
 Or hadst thou rather trust thy worthless Life 985  
 To Night and Ambuscades, than open Strife ?  
 To this the sullen Tyrant nought replies,  
 But at the Foe a Spear loud-whizzing flies,  
 Charg'd with an Answer. Rapid was its Force ;  
 But tow'rd's the Period of its furious Course 990  
*Oenides* beat it off, and whirls his own  
 With Strength and Vigour until then unknown.  
 Swift rush'd the Lance, and promis'd in its Flight  
 To put an End to the destructive Fight.  
 The fav'ring Gods of either Party bent 995  
 Their Eyes towards it, anxious for th' Event ;  
 But for his Brother the fell Fiend preserv'd  
*Eteocles*. Aside the Jav'lin swerv'd  
 To *Pblegyas*, his Squire, where midst the Press  
 He toil'd with equal Honour and Success. 1000  
 Now fiercer grown, th' *Ætolian* draws his Sword,  
 And rushes, but the *Theban* Arms afford  
 A grateful Shelter to the Coward-King.  
 As when the Shepherds, gath'ring in a Ring,  
 Attempt to drive the nightly Wolf away ; 1005  
 The prowling Savage, heedful of his Prey,  
 Pursues that only, nor attacks his Foes,  
 Whose Clubs and Stones annoy him as he goes.  
 Thus *Tydeus* disregards th' inferior Crowd,  
 And Vengeance on their guilty Monarch vow'd. 1010  
 Yet, scorning Opposition in the Chace,  
 He struck the daring *Thoas* in his Face ;  
 A well-aim'd Dart *Deilocbus* arrests,  
 And left its Point deep-buried in his Breasts :

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Pierc'd in the Side, then *Clonius* bit the Ground, 1015  
 And stern *Hippotades*, from whose wide Wound  
 The Bowels gush'd.—Full Helmets oft he skims  
 In Air, and to the Trunk restores his Limbs,  
 And now the Prince, unweary'd yet with Toils,  
 Block'd himself up with Carcasses and Spoils : 1020  
 With him alone the circling Hosts engage,  
 The single Object of their missile Rage.  
 Part glitter on the Surface of his Skin,  
 Part frustrate fall ; and Part are lodg'd within :  
 Some *Pallas* plucks away. His Targe appears 1025  
 An Iron-Grove, thick set with gleamy Spears.  
 No Crest is extant ; thro' the bristling Hide  
 His naked Back and Shoulders are descry'd :  
 And *Mars*, which on his Casque depictur'd fate,  
 Fell off, a joyless Omen of his Fate. 1030  
 The shiver'd Brass into his Body pent,  
 Wrought him such Pain as might have made relent  
 The bravest Heart, when lo ! a Stroke descends,  
 And from the Gums his gnashing Grinders rends.  
 His Breast is delug'd with a Tide of Gore, 1035  
 With Dust embrown'd, while each dilated Pore

v. 1019. *And now the Prince*] The magnanimous *Scarva* is in much the same Plight in the sixth Book of *Lucan's Pharsalia*.

*Illum tota premit moles, illum omnia tela.*  
 ———Fortis crebris sonat ictibus umbo,  
 Et galeæ fragmenta cavæ compressa perurunt  
 Tempora : nec quicquam nudis vitalibus obstat  
 Jam pater stantes in summis offibus hastas.  
 ———stat non fragilis pro Cæsare murus,  
 Pompeiumque tenet : jam pectora non tegit armis:  
 Ac veritus credi clypeo, lævaque vacasse,  
 Aut culpa vixisse sua non vulnera belli  
 Solus obit, densamque ferens in pectore sylvam,  
 Tum gradibus fessis, in quem cadet, eligit hostem.

BOOK VIII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 399

In copious Drops perspires.—Pleas'd he survey'd  
 His Bands applauding, and the martial Maid,  
 Who o'er her Eyes the spreading Ægis threw,  
 As to her Sire in his Behalf she flew. 1040  
 But see, an ashen Jav'lin cuts the Wind,  
 And leaves, with Anger charg'd, the Clouds behind.  
 Long was the Author of the Deed unknown,  
 Great *Menalippus*, for he durst not own :  
 At length the Foe's untimely Joy display'd 1045  
 The Warrior, herding in his Troop, betray'd.  
 For the pierc'd Hero, now no longer steel'd  
 Against the growing Anguish, loos'd his Shield,  
 And bent beneath the Wound. This seen, the *Greeks*  
 Rush to his Aid with Groans, nor manly Shrieks : 1050  
 The Sons of *Cadmus*, smiling at their Grief,  
 With Shouts triumphant intercept Relief.  
 The Chief, inspecting close the adverse Side,  
 The Marksman, lurking in the Crowd, espy'd,  
 Collects his whole Remains of Life and Strength, 1055  
 And throws a Weapon of enormous Length,  
 Which neighb'ring *Hoplus* gave, nor gave in vain :  
 Forth spouts the Blood, extorted by the Strain.  
 By Force his sad Companions drag him thence,  
 (While yet unconscious of his Impotence, 1060

v. 1041. *But see, an Ashen Javelin*] These Verses are imitated from *Virgil*.

Has inter voces, media inter talia verba,  
 Ecce viro stridens alis allapsa sagitta est :  
 Incertum quâ pulsa manu, quo turbine adasta ;  
 Quis tantam Rutulis laudem, casusne, Deusne,  
 Attulerit : pressa est insignis gloria facti,  
 Nec sese Æneæ jactavit vulnere quisquam.

*Æneid, Lib. 12. Ver. 323.*

Then bear him to the Margin of the Field,  
 His Sides supported in a double Shield;  
 And promise, he shall quickly reingage, 1065  
 When Strength shall second his undaunted Rage.  
 But he himself perceives his failing Breath,  
 And shudd'ring at the chilling Hand of Death,  
 Reclines on Earth, and cries—I die in Peace;  
 But pity me, O Sons of fertile *Greece*! 1070  
 I ask you not these Relics to convey  
 To *Argos*, or the Seat of regal Sway,  
 Regardless of my Body's future Doom,  
 Nor anxious for the Honours of the Tomb.  
 Curst are the brittle Limbs, which thus desert 1075  
 The Soul, when most their Strength they should exert.  
 All I solicit farther, is the Head  
 Of *Menalippus*; for my Jav'lin sped,  
 And stretch'd, I trust, the Dastard on the Plains:  
 Then haste, *Hippomedon*, if ought remains 1080

v. 1964. *His Sides*] The Ancients were wont to carry their Generals who fell in Battle on a Shield; as we learn from *Virgil*, Book 10.

— At focii multo gemitu, lacrymisque,  
 Impositum scuto referunt Pallanta frequentes.

Again, Book 10.

At Laufum fociii exanimum super arma ferebant.

The losing a Shield in Combat was looked upon as the greatest Disgrace that could befall a Man:

Tecum Philippos & celerem fugam  
 Sensi, relicta non bene parmula,

says *Horace*: hence the famous Saying of the *Spartan* Lady, when she gave her Son a Shield; 'Aut cum illo, aut in illo;' i. e. 'Either return with it, or upon it.'—Part of this Note belongs to *Bernartius*.



# BOOK VIII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 401

Of *Argive* Blood ; and thou, *Arcadian* Youth,  
 In Praise of whom Fame e'en detracts from Truth :  
 Go, valiant *Capaneus*, thy Country's Boast,  
 And now the greatest of th' *Argolic* Host.  
 All mov'd : but *Capaneus* arrives the first, 1085  
 Where breathing yet he lay, deform'd with Dust,  
 And took him on his Shoulders. Down his Back  
 Flows the warm Blood, and leaves a Crimson Track.  
 Such look'd *Alcides*, when in Times of Yore  
 He enter'd *Argos* with the captive Boar. 1090  
 O'ercome with Joy and Anger, *Tydeus* tries  
 To raise himself, and meets with eager Eyes  
 The deathful Object, pleas'd as he survey'd  
 His own Condition in his Foe's pourtray'd.  
 The sever'd Head impatient he demands, 1095  
 And grasps with Fervour in his trembling Hands,

v. 1095. *The sever'd Head*] We are now come to that remarkable Action of *Tydeus* which so much offended Mr. *Pope*, that, in vindicating a Passage of *Homer*, where *Achilles* wishes, he could eat the Flesh of *Hector*, he says, ' However, this is much more tolerable ' than a Passage in the *Thebaid* of *Statius*, where *Tydeus* in the very ' Pangs of Death, is represented as gnawing the Head of his Enemy.'——But with Deference to the Memory of that great Man, I must beg Leave to offer something in my Author's Defence, which I shall leave the Reader to consider.

First, with Respect to the Fact taken absolutely, and in itself, the Poet does not recite it as worthy of Imitation, or praise his Hero for the Perpetration of it ; but expresses his Abhorrence of it, and informs us, that *Tisiphone* suggested it to *Tydeus*, and that *Pallas* herself, his staunch Patroness, was so disgusted as utterly to desert him : these are Circumstances that sufficiently absolve the Poet from the Censure of making his favourite Character so monstrously brutish and inhuman.

Secondly, if we consider it comparatively, we must observe, that the Will and Intention, which only render moral Actions culpable were the same both in *Achilles* and *Tydeus*. The former wishes he could eat his Enemy's Flesh, the latter does it ; so that the only

While he remarks the restless Balls of Sight,  
 That fought and shun'd alternately the Light.  
 Contented now, his Wrath began to cease,  
 And the fierce Warrior had expir'd in Peace ; 1100  
 But the fell Fiend a Thought of Vengeance bred,  
 Unworthy of himself, and of the dead.  
 Mean while, her Sire unmov'd, *Tritonia* came,  
 To crown her Hero with immortal Fame :  
 But, when she saw his Jaws besprinkled o'er 1105  
 With spatter'd Brains, and ting'd with living Gore ;  
 Whilst his imploring Friends attempt in vain  
 To calm his Fury, and his Rage restrain :  
 Again, recoiling from the loathsome View,  
 The sculptur'd Target o'er her Face she threw ; 1110  
 And, her Affection chang'd to sudden Hate,  
 Resign'd *Oenides* to the Will of Fate :  
 But, ere she join'd the Senate of the Skies,  
 Purg'd in *Ilyssos* her unhallow'd Eyes.

Difference is, that *Tydeus* had a better Appetite, and less Aversion to human Flesh than *Achilles*.

Lastly, if it is really a Fault, the Commission of it was owing to the extravagant Veneration that *Statius* had for *Homer*, as it is evidently imitated from the abovementioned Passage in the *Iliad*: so that the original Thought will still be chargeable on that great Author.

v. 1114. *Ilyssos*] Is a River of *Elisium*, which the Poet terms guiltless, because it makes guiltless, *i. e.* purifies. It is opposed to *Styx*, a Stream of Hell; and called in *Greek* *Havoc*, from *Avoc*, that is to say, Solution because Souls after the Solution of their corporeal Bonds descend to those Fields.

**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE NINTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

**T**HE Thebans, spirited up by Eteocles, to revenge the Insult offered to Menalippus's Body, renew the Fight with great Ardour. Polynices, almost overcome with Grief for the Death of Tydeus, laments very pathetically over him. Hippomedon opposes the Enemy's Onset with unparalleled Fortitude. Lycus wounds him. He is assisted by Alcon, and kills Mopsus, Polites, and many others of Note. The Fury Tisiphone draws him off from attacking the Thebans by a false Insinuation of Adrastus's being taken Prisoner. In the mean Time the Grecians are worsted, and the Body of Tydeus is wrested from them: Hippomedon returns to the Combat, pursues them into the River, and after a great Slaughter of them, is opposed by the God of the Stream himself, and being cast on Shore, is overpowered by their Numbers, and slain, notwithstanding Juno's Interposition with Jupiter in his Behalf. Parthenopæus then signalizes himself by his Feats of Archery, and is presented by Diana with a Set of poisoned Arrows. She solicits Apollo in his Favour, but to no Purpose. He is near being slain by Amphion, but the Goddess and Dorceus rescue him. At length Dryas, at the Instigation of Mars, slays him, and is killed himself by an invisible Agent, supposed to be Diana herself. The young Arcadian just at the Point of Death gives his last Commands to Dorceus, with which the Book concludes.

## THE

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE NINTH.

THE brutal Rage of bloody *Tydeus* fires  
 His Foes, and th' Ardour of Revenge inspires.  
 E'en his own *Grecians* less deplore his Fate,  
 And blame his Fury and Excess of Hate.  
*Mars* too, severest on th' embattel'd Mead, 5  
 Fame represents disgusted at the Deed,  
 What time, a vig'rous Agent in the War,  
 O'er Hills of slain he drove his rattling Car.  
 So dire a Scene the God could not survey,  
 But turn'd his Steeds, and measur'd back the Way. 10  
 To punish then the Injury sustain'd  
 By *Menalippus*, on his Corse prophan'd  
 The *Theban* Youth with Wrath rekindled rise.  
 From Man to Man th' infectious Vengeance flies,

v. 1. *The brutal Rage*] The Poet, foreseeing as it were, that he should offend the Delicacy of the Critics by this Narrative, seems in this Passage to have endeavoured to obviate the Censure, and assure the Reader, that he did not propose this Action of his Hero as worthy of Imitation, but quite the Reverse:—with a View to this, he represents *Mars* expressing his Abhorrence of it in the strongest Manner, and introduces *Eteocles* taking Advantage of this Act of Brutality, to rally the *Thebans* to the Charge.

As if some Foe their Sires should disintomb, 15  
 And their Remains a Prey to Monsters doom.  
 The Monarch fans the Fire, and thus bespeaks:  
 Who now will favour, and account the *Greeks*  
 As Men?—Behold! with Arms supply'd no more  
 They ply their Teeth, and lap the *Theban* Gore, 20  
 Say, do we not with *Lybian* Lions fight,  
 With human Art opposing savage Might.  
 See *Tydeus*, as a Lenitive in Death,  
 Feeding on hostile Flesh resigns his Breath:  
 With Fire and Sword contented we engage; 25  
 Their Want of Weapons is supplied by Rage.  
 Refining Cruelty, full in the View  
 Of *Jove*, this impious Track may they pursue.  
 Yet truly they the Prophet's End bemoan,  
 And curse the Land for Mischiefs not its own. 30  
 In Words like these the King harangu'd aloud,  
 And vainly stalk'd before th' obsequious Crowd.  
 In all an equal Fury burns, to gain  
 The Spoils and hated Corse of *Tydeus* slain.  
 Thus Fowls obscene hang o'er the liquid Way. 35  
 When from afar the wafting Gales convey

v. 35. *Thus Fowls obscene*] *Milton* has a noble Simile conceived in the genuine Spirit of this Author:

As when a Flock  
 Of rav'nous Fowl, though many a League remote,  
 Against the Day of Battle, to a Field  
 Where Armies lie incamp'd, come flying, lur'd  
 With Scent of living Carcases, design'd  
 For Death the following Day, in bloody Fight.

*Par. Lost*, Book 10. v. 273.

The Scent of Bodies that unburied lie,  
 And taint the thick'ning Æther.—As they fly,  
 With flapping Pinions all the Skies resound :  
 The lesser Birds retire, and quit their Ground. 40.  
 Fame flies from Man to Man, from Band to Band,  
 And spreads vague Murmurs o'er the *Theban* Land ;  
 More swift than wont she plies her sable Wings,  
 When woeful Tidings to some Wretch she brings.  
 To trembling *Polynices* now she bears 45  
 The dismal News, and thunders in his Ears.  
 His Tears congeal'd, all petrified with Grief,  
 He stands, and for a Time witholds Belief.  
 For his superior Valour, so well known,  
 Forbids him to believe the Chief o'erthrown: 50  
 But when a fresh Report pronounc'd him dead,  
 A Cloud of Grief his Eyes and Mind o'erspread ;  
 All Circulation ceasing in his Veins.  
 He faints, he falls : his Arms bestrew the Plains.  
 His Tears now gush forth at the last Effort, 55  
 And the bright Greaves his falling Shield support.  
 Lonely he walks amidst a circling Throng,  
 And scarcely drags his fault'ring Knees along,  
 And cumbrous Spear, as though he was deprest  
 With countless Wounds, and pain'd above the rest. 60  
 The breathless Hero by his Comrades shewn,  
 Who the sad Prince attend with many a Groan,  
 He grovels o'er the Corse, (while from his Eyes  
 The Tears run copious) and desponding cries,  
 O *Tydeus*, Hope of all my warlike Toils, 65  
 Prop of my Cause, and Partner of my Spoils !

v. 65. O *Tydeus*] These Reflections of *Polynices* on the Death of *Tydeus* are very manly and pathetic : They display a Dignity of Soul

Is this the Recompence I should bestow,  
 Are these the Thanks which to my Friend I owe,  
 That in my Sight I suffer thee to lie  
 Unwept and bare beneath a foreign Sky ? . . . 70  
 In Exile now far worse than Death I rove,  
 Depriv'd in thee of more than Brother's Love.  
 Nor seek I now the Crown by Lot decreed,  
 And sullied Throne to which I should succeed :  
 Little I prize the Badges of Command, . . . 75  
 And Scepter, which I take not from thy Hand.  
 Stand off, ye Warriors, and to me alone  
 Resign the Fight :—The Fortune is my own.  
 No longer now your useless Arms employ  
 Nor in Pursuit of Vengeance still destroy. . . . 80  
 What greater Proof of Malice can you give,  
 Or how can I atone, while I survive,  
 For my Friend's Death ?—O King, O conscious Night,  
 Begun with Strife, but closing with Delight !  
 O *Argos*, dearest to the Gods above, . . . 85  
 And short-liv'd Wrath, the Pledge of lasting Love !

Soul, a Disinterestedness of Friendship, and an Overflowing of Gratitude, that is rarely to be found in the Breast of the Ambitious : And I doubt not, but Readers of the same delicate Mould as the speaker here seems to be, will meet with a great deal of Entertainment in the Perusal of this masterly Oration.

v. 77. *Stand off, ye Warriors,*] This Action, which proves the great Courage of *Polynices*, has been censured in *Achilles*, as a Mark of the utmost Rashness and Fool-hardiness ; yet it is remarkable, that *Virgil* and *Milton*, as well as our Author, have imitated it from *Homer*.

At pius *Aeneas* dextram tendebat inermem  
 Nudato capite, atque suos clamore vocabat.  
 Quo ruitis ? quæve ista repens Discordia surgit !  
 O cohibete iras : istum jam fœdus, et omnes  
 Compositæ leges, mihi jus concurrere soli ;  
 Me finitæ atque auferte metus. —

*Æneid*, L. 12.  
Oh.



Oh ! hadst thou (while my Life was in thy Hand,  
 Stretch'd me unpitied on a foreign Strand !  
 Yet more—Great Chief, thou didst adopt my Cause,  
 And, trusting *Jove* and hospitable Laws, 90  
 Repair to *Thebes*, whence none would have return'd  
 Less brave.—So strong the Flame of Friendship burn'd.  
 Fame hath e'en now of *Thebes* ceas'd to boast,  
 And *Telamon*'s Renown in thine is lost.  
 How chang'd thy Form ! ah ! what a diff'rent Air !  
 But say, what Wounds shall first employ my Care ? 96  
 How shall I know the *Theban* Blood from thine ?  
 And in thy Death what Numbers did combine ?  
 Full well I ween, this envious *Jove* decreed,  
 And *Mars* with all his Javelin help'd the Deed. 100  
 He spake, and washes with his Tears away  
 The Clots of Blood that on the Visage lay ;  
 And ev'ry Limb compos'd, thus cries anew :  
 Could'st thou thus far my just Revenge pursue,  
 And I still breathe ?—This said, with Woe distress'd,  
 He points the naked Sceptre to his Breast. 106  
 His pitying Friends restrain'd his daring Hands,  
 While the good King his Rashness reprimands,  
 And sooths his Rage, revolving in his Mind  
 The Turns of War, and what the Fates design'd ; 110  
 Then from the much-lov'd Corse, from which arose  
 His Love of Death, and Bitterness of Woes,  
 He steals the Youth, and, whilst his Words afford  
 A sweet Delusion, sheaths unseen the Sword.  
 Such o'er th' unfinish'd Field (his Comrade dead) 115  
 The Bull, inactive with Despair, is led :

v. 115. *Such o'er th' unfinish'd*] The Hint of this beautiful Simile was taken from one in the 13th Book of *Homer's Iliad*.

Part of the Yoke on his bent Neck he wears,  
 And Part the Swain, the Tears fast-streaming bears.  
 But see! the Flow'r of all the *Theban* Band,  
 Fir'd with their Chief's Example and Command, 120  
 Appears, whose Prowess *Mars* might not despise,  
 Nor *Pallas* view their Skill but with Surprise.  
 Unmov'd *Hippomedon* the Shock withstands,  
 A Shield and Spear protended in his Hands;  
 As some high Cliff, whose bleak and rugged Brow 125  
 O'erhangs the Deeps, nor fears the Surge below,  
 Nor storms above, but stands by both unmov'd,  
 Their Threats defy'd, their utmost Fury prov'd.

Ἀλλ' ὅς τ' ἐὼς νῆα βίη οἶοντα πηκτὸν ἄροτρον  
 Ἴσον θυμὸν ἔχουσι τιτάνεσσιν, ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρα σφιν  
 Πρυμνοῖσιν κηρίωσι πολλὸς ἀνακαλῆαι ἰδρύς,  
 Τὰ μὲν τὰ ζυγὸν εἰσι ἰδύουσι ἄμφω ἱέρην  
 ἱεμένω κατὰ ὄλνα, τίμναι δὲ τι τίλῃσι ἀρένης. V. 706.

v. 121. *Whose Prowess Mars might not despise*] This Distinction of Skill and Prowess cannot appear superfluous to any one who considers, that Valour tempered with Prudence was the characteristical Property of *Pallas*, and that meer brutal Courage only was attributed to *Mars*.

v. 125. *As some high Cliff*] *Virgil* and *Tasso* have two Comparisons upon this Subject.

Ille, velut pelagi rupes immota, resistit :  
 Ut pelagi rupes, magno veniente fragore,  
 Quæ sese multis circum latrantibus undis,  
 Mole tenet : scopuli nequicquam et spumea circum  
 Saxa fremunt, laterique illisa refunditur alga.

*Æn.* 7. v. 586

Ma come alle procelle esposto monte,  
 Che percosso dai flutti al mar s'ovraffe,  
 Sostien firme in se stesso i tuoni, e l' onto  
 Del ciel irato, e i venti, e l'onde vaste :

The Repetition of *Pelagi rupes* adds greatly to the Merit of *Virgil*; *Tasso's* is too confin'd to admit of any heightening Circumstances, and our Author's is spoil'd by that unlucky Bathos at the Close.

E'en worsted *Neptune* shuns th'unèqual War,  
 And shatter'd Ships decline it from afar. 130  
*Eteocles* first ey'd the godlike Man,  
 And, ere he whirl'd his Javelin, thus began,  
 Say, are ye not asham'd to war in Sight  
 Of Heav'n, for one whose Deeds disgrace the Fight.  
 Is it such Merit, such Renown to save 135  
 A savage Monster's Relicks for the Grave?  
 Lest unlamented, uninterr'd he lie,  
 And his Corse rot beneath a foreign Sky?  
 Dismiss your Cares: nor Beasts nor Birds of Prey  
 Will drink his Gore, and bear his Flesh away; 140  
 Nay, should his Corse to *Vulcan's* Rage be doom'd,  
 The pious Flames would leave it unconsum'd.  
 He ceas'd, and flung a Javelin, which the Brass  
 Forbade beyond the second Orb to pass.  
 Then *Pheres*, and the vig'rous *Lycus* threw. 145  
 Short of its Aim the Dart of *Pheres* flew;  
 While that of vig'rous *Lycus* lightly graz'd  
 The nodding Helm with sculptur'd Forms emblaz'd.  
 Cleft by the Point, the Crests asunder fled,  
 And thro' the Casque appear'd his naked Head. 150  
 Astounded with the Stroke, he dares not fly,  
 Nor on his own Defence alone rely;  
 But wheresoe'er he turns the Corse he views,  
 And standing or advancing; still pursues  
 That for his Object, nor to aim a Blow, 155  
 Desists to watch the Motions of the Foe.  
 Not thus, with all a Mother's Fury stung,  
 The lowing Heifer guards her first-born Young.

When the gaunt Wolf her straw-built Fortress forms;  
 A Circle, wheeling, with her Horns she forms, 160  
 And dauntless foams, nor mindful of her Sex,  
 With more than female Rage the War expects.  
 At length the Cloud of flying Javelins o'er,  
 The Weapons to their Owners they restore.  
 First *Sicyonian Alcon* lent his Aid, 165  
 And with him brought from *Pisan Ida's* Shade  
 A Troop of Youths.—On these the Chief relies,  
 And hurls a Beam against his Enemies.  
 Swift as a Shaft the Ruin wings its Way  
 Across the Field, nor knowing of Delay, 170  
 A Passage thro' the Shield of *Mopsus* broke,  
 And fell'd *Polites* with a sudden Stroke.  
 At *Cydon* and *Phalantibus* then he threw,  
 And *Eryx*, wounded through his Helmet, flew,  
 Whilst in the Search of Weapons back he turn'd, 175  
 Nor fearing Death, with Hopes of Conquest burn'd :  
 As quiv'ring in his Jaws the Lance he views,  
 In Death's last Anguish the tough Wood he chews,  
 While mix'd with Murmurs, gush'd the purple Spring,  
 And on the Point his Teeth all loosen'd ring. 180  
*Leonteus*, hid behind his social Band,  
 Forth from the Rank advanc'd his trembling Hand,

of *Patroclus* in the 17th Book of the *Iliad*, though diversified with many additional Circumstances : and this elegant Comparison is paraphrased from one in the Beginning of the above-mentioned Book.

οὐδ' ἴλαθ' Ἀτρίῳ γόνι ἀρτίφειλον Μενέλαον  
 Πάτροκλῳ Τρώεσσι δαμνέειν ἐν δήοι τῇτι·  
 βῆ δὲ ἄλγος προμάχων κικρυμένῳ αἰδομένο·  
 ἄμφι δ' ἄρ' αὐτῷ βαῖν', ὥς τις περὶ πύργου μέγα  
 Πρωτότακῳ κινυρή, ἢ περὶ σιδῆρα τόκω·  
 \*Ὡς περὶ Πατρίων βαῖνι ζῶντι Μενέλαῳ.

And seizing by the Hair, in Quest of Prey,  
 Effay'd to draw the Warriors Corse away.  
*Hippomedon* the Dastard's Aim descrics, 185  
 And though from ev'ry Quarter Dangers rise,  
 Sheer from his Arm the guilty Hand divides  
 With his keen Blade, and thus insulting chides.  
 Be this thy Punishment, vile Wretch, 'and know,  
 'Tis *Tydeus*, *Tydeus* gives the wrathful Blow : 190  
 Henceforth the Relics of the dead revere,  
 And the Revenge of breathless Heroes fear  
 Thrice did the *Thebans* bear away the slain,  
 And thrice the *Grecian* Phalanx did regain.  
 As in a Storm on the *Sicilian* Main 195  
 An anxious Vessel wanders (whilst in vain  
 The Pilot struggles with the driving Wind)  
 And measures back the Space she left behind.  
 Nor then, repuls'd by countless Enemies,  
*Hippomedon* had quitted his Emprize, 200  
 Tho' their loud-thund'ring Engines interpos'd,  
 The total Force of *Thebes* had with him clos'd,  
 And cover'd with join'd Shields their banded Pow'rs,  
 (A Mode of Fight the Bane of lofty Tow'rs)  
 But the fell Fury, mindful of her Lord, 205  
 And *Tydeus*' Rage detested and abhorr'd,

v. 190. 'Tis *Tydeus*, *Tydeus* gives the wrathful]

——Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas  
 Immolat, & pœnam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.

v. 193. *Thrice did the Thebans*] *Statius* in this Passage had an  
 Eye to the following Lines in the *Iliad*.

Τρεῖς μὲν μιν μετέπιαθε ποδῶν λαοὶ Φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ,  
 Ελπίμενοι μίμναις, μίχα δὲ Τρώεσσι ὀμόκλη.  
 Τρεῖς δὲ δὴ Αἰάοις ὄφρ' ἐπικειμένοι ἀλκὴν,  
 Νικῆν ἀπεσφίλιζαν.

v. 205. *But the fell Fury*] This Piece of Machinery is very well  
 conducted, and the Description of *Tisiphone* full of that sublime

Invades by Stealth the Centre of the Field,  
 Transform'd her Person, and her Garb conceal'd.  
 Both Hosts perceiv'd her, and thro' Horse and Man  
 The dewy Sweat of sudden Horror ran : 210  
 Though her stern Face relax'd into a Smile,  
*Halys* she shews, to carry on the Guile.  
 The Snakes desist to hiss at her Command ;  
 Nor Scourge, nor Torch obscene was in her Hand.  
 Array'd in Arms, and bland in Voice and Look, 215  
 Beside *Hippomedon* her Stand she took ;  
 Yet, while her artful Tale the Warrior heard,  
 He fear'd her Looks, and wonder'd why he fear'd.  
 To whom, dissolv'd in Tears, the Fury said :  
 Illustrious Hero, vain is all thine Aid 220  
 To guard the Bodies scatter'd on the Plain,  
 (But, are we anxious for th' unburied Slain ?)  
 Behold, incompass'd by a barb'rous Throng,  
 The great, the good *Adrastus* drag'd along !  
 In Preference to all the *Grecian* Band. 225  
 On thee he calls, and beckons with his Hand.  
 I saw him fall (a Scene scarce to be borne)  
 The Crown from off his hoary Temples torn.  
 Not far from hence he toils.—Direct thine Eyes,  
 Where thick in Air the Clouds of Dust arise. 230  
 Pond'ring at this a while the Warrior stands,  
 And weighs his Fears, the Fury reprimands.  
 Why dost thou hesitate ? say, do we go,  
 Or yield the Dead and Living to the Foe ?

Imagery, which constitutes the chief Beauty of heroic Poetry : the Gods, Goddesses, and other supernatural Deities very often are introduced in this Manner, and in particular there is one Instance of it in the 13th Book of the *Iliad*, where *Neptune* in the Form of *Calchas*, inspirits the two *Ajaxes* to continue the Battle ; from whence, I presume, this was taken.

# BOOK IX. STATIUS' THEBAID. 415

He leaves the wretched Office to his Friends, 235  
 And, to relieve the King, his Progress bends ;  
 Yet oft reverts his Eyes toward the Slain,  
 Prepar'd, whence'er recall'd, to turn again.  
 He blindly follow'd, where the Fury led,  
 And here and there his Course erroneous sped, 240  
 Till, casting back her Shield, she wing'd her Flight,  
 Burst by the Snakes, her Casque admits the Light.  
 The Clouds dispersing, he beholds from far  
*Adrastus* safe and fearless in his Car.  
 The *Thebans* the contested Corse possess, 245  
 And notify with Clamours their Success :  
 The Shouts victorious dwell upon their Ears,  
 And strike the *Grecians'* Souls with Grief and Fears.  
 See *Tydeus*, (thus all-potent Fate decreed)  
 Drag'd to and fro across the hostile Mead ! 250  
*Tydeus*, whom not the mightiest Chief withstood ;  
 But often as the *Thebans* he pursu'd,  
 A Passage open to his Progress lay,  
 Whether on Foot or Horse he took his Way.  
 No Rest their Arms or wearied Hands obtain, 255  
 Employ'd to wreak their Vengeance on the Slain.  
 Securely now they pierce his clay-cold Face,  
 And the great Dead with Wounds unfelt disgrace.  
 Promiscuous here the brave and tim'rous stood,  
 Deeming their Hands ennobled with his Blood, 260

v. 257. *Securely now*] The unfortunate  *Hector*  meets with the same  
 ungenerous Treatment from the *Grecians* ;  *Homer's Iliad, Lib. 22.*   
 v. 369.

———— ἄλλοι δὲ περιδραμεῖς ἦσαν Ἀχαιῶν,  
 οἳ καὶ ἴσθαιτο φῶβον, ὃ εἶδος ἀνθρώπων  
 "Εὐταφῶν" ἔδ' ἄρα οἱ τίς αὐτῆσι γὰρ παρέσθην.

And to their Wives and tender Infants show  
 The Weapons, stain'd with Carnage of the Foe.  
 Thus when, with Force combin'd, the *Lybian* Swains  
 Have quash'd the stern Dispeopler of the Plains,  
 Thro' Dread of whom each Night the Folds were barr'd,  
 And the sad Shepherds form'd a watchful Guard. 266  
 The Fields exult, with Shouts the Hinds arise;  
 They pluck his Mane, and gaze with wond'ring Eyes;  
 And, while his hideous Yawn and Bulk engage  
 Their Notice, call to Mind his living Rage, 270  
 Whether upon some Rustick's Wall he's view'd,  
 Or decks an ancient Daughter of the Wood.  
 But fierce *Hippomedon* returns again,  
 And, though he clearly sees, he fights in vain  
 For the rap'd Body lends his useless Aid, 275  
 And brandishes aloft his fatal Blade.  
 Scarce he selects his Comrades from his Foes,  
 Whilst, unresisted, through the War he goes.  
 But now the Ground, with slipp'ry Slaughter dy'd,  
 Arms, dying Warriors, Cars without a Guide, 280  
 And his left Thigh, whose Wound he wou'd not own,  
 Or which in Time of Conflict was unknown,  
 Retard the Chace, and oft his trembling Knees  
 Refuse their Aid.—*Hopleus* at length he sees,

v. 253. *Thus when, &c.*] This Comparison is a fine Illustration of what the Poet has heretofore said of this Hero; and here it may not be *mal-a-propos* to remark, that our Author, with a truly becoming Spirit, deigns very rarely to tread in the Path of his Predecessors, and adopt in his Works the Allusions of others. This the Reader must have observed, as I have always confronted him with the Original, whenever he does it. Nor are his Imitations, like those of *Virgil* from *Homer*, a servile Copy: A Hint is sufficient to him; he only takes the Outlines of a Picture, and fills them up with masterly Traits of his own Fancy, which give it an Air of Originality, and do not less Honour to his Genius than Judgment.



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The 'Squire and Comrade of th' *Ætolian* Chief: 285  
 Who, bath'd in Sorrow, and intranc'd with Grief,  
 On his great Master's gen'rous Courser sate.  
 The Steed unknowing this last Act of Fate,  
 Neighs and curvets (his graceful Neck depress'd)  
 And only grieves at th' Interval of Rest. 290  
 Imbolden'd now against th' inferior Band  
 Of Infantry, sad *Hoplens* takes in Hand,  
 The Reins, and strokes the Steed that will not own  
 Another Lord, and bear a Load unknown.  
 Then thus accosts him.—Why, unhappy Steed, 295  
 Dost thou desert me at my greatest Need,  
 And, mindless of Command, refuse to bear?  
 No longer regal Trappings shalt thou wear,  
 Nor pamper'd on *Ætolia's* verdant Plain,  
 In the clear Current bathe thy flowing Mane. 300  
 For what remains, avenge thy Master's Shade,  
 At least pursue them: nor a Captive made,  
 Endure the Burden of a Foe abhorr'd,  
 Nor after *Tydeus* take a foreign Lord.  
 The Horse, as sensible of his Discourse, 305  
 Springs forth resistless as the Lightning's Force.

v. 295. *Why unhappy Steed*] There is something extremely pathetic in this Address; and *Statius* is not singular in making his Heroes accost their Horses. *Hector* in the 8th Book of the *Iliad*; and *Achilles* in the 19th makes a formal Speech to these Animals. The Harangue of *Mezentius* to his Courser in the 10th Book of the *Æneid* is in some Respects like this before us.

— Aut hodie victor spolia illa cruenta  
 Et caput *Æneæ* referes, Lausque dolorum  
 Ultor eris mecum; aut aperit si nulla viam vis,  
 Occumbes pariter, neque enim, fortissime, credo  
 Iussa aliena pati, et dominos dignabere Teucros. V. 862.

Transports him like a Torrent o'er the Plains,  
 Nor scorns his equal Guidance of the Reins.  
 The Centaur thus from *Ossa's* piny Brow  
 Descends impetuous to the Vales below, 310  
 Half Man, half Beast : where'er his Course he takes,  
 The Hill, the Dale, the Grove, the Forest shakes.  
 Collected in one Herd, the *Theban* Race  
 Retires, while headlong he pursues the Chace, 314  
 And mows them down, ere scarce they feel the Wound ;  
 The headless Trunks fall backward on the Ground.  
 The vanquish'd Warriors now in Prospect reach  
 Their native Stream, and press to gain the Beach ;  
 Above his wonted Swell *Ismenos* rose,  
 A certain Signal of impending Woes. 320  
 Here, from the Labours of the longsome Way  
 Respiring, they indulge a short Delay.

v. 309. *The Centaur*] This Comparison is imitated from *Virgil*, *Æneid* 7.

Ceu duo nubigenæ cum vertice montis ab alto  
 Descendunt centauri, Omolen, Othrynque nivalem  
 Linquentes cursu rapido : dat euntibus ingens  
 Sylva locum, et magno cedunt virgulta fragore.

Those who think *Virgil* had not a strong and sublime Imagination (says the Editor of *Pitt's* Version) are desired to consider this Simile, all the Circumstances of it are painted with Homeric Spirit and Magnificence, particularly,

Dat euntibus ingens  
 Sylva locum, et magno cedunt virgulta fragore.

To have a just Idea of the Thing described, says *Burmans*, we are to suppose these Centaurs half Horse and half Man, but resembling the Horse in the Fore-part, and so bearing down with their Breast all that stood in their Way. *Statius* *Theb.* 9. 220. imitates our Author in a Manner rather bold than just.—Thus far Mr. *Warton*, from whose Sentence in Matters of Taste there lies no Appeal: However, I wish he had specified in what our Author has not imitated this Comparison justly.

The Waves, astonish'd at th' uncouth Alarms,  
 Roll back, and glitter with the Blaze of Arms,  
 They plung'd with half the Bank into the Tide, 325  
 While Clouds of Dust conceal'd the farther Side.  
 He too leaps fearless from the broken Steep,  
 Accoutred as he was, and tempts the Deep,  
 Tenacious of the Reins, while heap'd on high,  
 The hostile Billows thick before him fly. 330  
 Beside a Poplar, that o'erhangs the Flood,  
 On the green Turf his Darts conspicuous stood.  
 Dispirited with Fear, and scarce alive,  
 They cast away their Arms and basely dive,  
 Their Helms unlac'd, beneath the whelming Surge,  
 Nor while their Breath permits, again emerge: 336  
 While some by swimming hope the Shore to gain,  
 But, cumber'd by their Armour, hope in vain ; -  
 The radiant Belts around their Middles thrown,  
 And wetted Breastplates help to weigh them down. 340  
 As when in Ocean the Sky-tinctur'd Race  
 Of Fishes spy some Dolphin on the Chace,

v. 325. *They plung'd with half the Bank into*] This Battle in the River *Ismenos* is copied from that of *Homer* in the 21st *Iliad* and I doubt not, but, after an attentive Comparison, the Reader will find it diversified with equally striking Circumstances, and adorned with all that Variety of Imagery, which has been so much admired in the Original.

v. 341. *As when in Ocean*] The Poet, judiciously varying the Subject of his Similes with the Element, compares *Hippomedon* pursuing the *Thebans* in the River *Ismenos*, to a Dolphin in Chace of the lesser Fry. The Reader may see the Materials, on which our Author worked, by perusing the following Lines of *Homer*; but what he has drawn up in a simple unadorn'd Manner, his Copier has enriched with all the Flowers of Language and Luxuriancy of Description.

ὣς δ' ὅπ' ἀπὸ δαλφῶν· μεγακέρτε· ἰχθύες ἅλας  
 θύεσσιν, σιμπλάσι μυχὸς λιμέν· εὐόμας  
 ἀνδιότις· μάλα γάρ τε κατιδίαι· ἐν κελύεσσιν.

Whose spouting Gills, and Storm-exciting Tail  
 Upturn the Sands, so much their Fears prevail  
 That in huge Shoals they seek their watry Caves, 345  
 Mix with the Weeds, or lurk beneath the Waves ;  
 Nor from the Deeps emerge, till far away  
 He swims, to make some well-mann'd Ship his Prey.  
 Thus the fierce Hero drives the scatter'd Trains,  
 And in Mid-Water moderates the Reins, 350  
 And grasps his Arms : he still maintains his Seat,  
 And buoys his Steed up, rowing with his Feet,  
 Whose Hoof, accustom'd only to the Land,  
 Slides to and fro, and seeks the firmer Sand.  
*Chromis* flew *Ion*, *Antiphus* lays dead 355  
*Chromis*, and *Antiphus* by *Hypsæus* bled.  
 Then o'er *Astyages* black Death impends,  
 And *Linus*, who, the River pass'd, ascends  
 The Bank ; but Fate forbidding him to land,  
 He tumbles back beneath great *Hypsæus*' Hand. 360  
 With equal Rage the *Greek* and *Theban* burn,  
 From that same Stream ne'er destin'd to return.  
 At both the River casts a fearful View,  
 While both to Crimson change its sable Hue.  
 Now mangled Skulls and Members of the Slain, 365  
 Light Helmets which the floating Crests sustain,  
 Darts, Bows unbent, and Shields of ductile Gold  
 Adown the bellowing Current glitt'ring roll'd.  
 With wand'ring Arms the Surface is o'erspread,  
 The Bottom with the Corpes of the Dead : 370  
 There Warriors struggling in the Pangs of Death,  
 The Stream oppos'd drives back their issuing Breath.  
 Whilst, borne away by the resistless Flood,  
 Young *Agrius* seiz'd a lowly Elm that stood

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On the green Bank (his slid'd ring Steps to stay) 375  
 The stern *Menaceus* lopp's his Arms away.  
 Supine he tumbles : the shock'd Tree surveys  
 His Hands, still clenching its expanded Sprays.  
 The Spear of *Hypseus* hapless *Sages* found ;  
 The Hero sinks, deform'd with many a Wound, 380  
 Whilst for his Body Blood alone returns.  
 His Brother to regain, *Agenor* burns,  
 Ill-fated Chief ! and from the steepy Strand  
 Leap'd headlong down, and grasp'd him in his Hand :  
 But with the Stream imbib'd more heavy grown, 385  
 The wounded *Sages* sinks *Agenor* down,  
 Who from the Deeps might have emerg'd again,  
 But Love detain'd him there, his Brother slain.  
 Whilst rising *Chaletus* attempts a Wound,  
 By circling Eddies in the Gulph profound 390  
 He sinks absorb'd : The gath'ring Billows rise  
 Above his Head, till all conceal'd he lies.  
 No more his Hand is seen, his Sword beneath  
 The Depths descends, divided from the Sheath.  
 In various Shapes, and countless Forms appear 395  
 Ruin and Death.—A *Mycalesian* Spear

v. 382. *His Brother to regain*] Of all the Instances of brotherly Love and Friendship, I think this is at once the most strong and delicate. It is one of that Kind of Incidents, which, whilst they take off from and lessen the Horrors of War, plunge us into the Depth of Distress, and call forth that exquisite Sensibility, which is an Ornament to our Nature, and the greatest Proof of a good and generous Heart. Neither will those think this Action merely poetical, who have read the Epitaph on the two *Lytteltons* in *Magdalen College Chapel, Oxon* ; one of whom slipping into the Water, his Brother jump'd in, and was drowned with him. Neither *Homer*, *Virgil*, nor any other Author presents us with an Anecdote of their Warriors equally beautiful.

*Agyrtes* strikes: in vain he looks behind,  
 The latent Owner of the Dart to find;  
 But hurried onward by the rapid Flood,  
 The flying Lance drank deeply of his Blood. 400  
 The Courser next of *Caledonian* Strain  
 (His Shoulders pierc'd) stung with the deathful Pain,  
 Rears up and resting on his Feet behind,  
 With Hoofs uplifted paws the yielding Wind.  
 Firm'd as he was against the watry Force, 405  
 The Hero pities his expiring Horse,  
 And, whilst deep Groans burst from his heaving Heart,  
 Resigns the Reins, and then extracts the Dart.  
 Safer in Gait and Aim, the Chief renews  
 On Foot the Conflict, and the Foe pursues. 410  
 To *Nomius* first, his Conquest he extends,  
 On *Mimas* and *Licetas* next descends  
 His Blade: Then *Licbas* of *Thibæan* Strain,  
 And young *Thespiades*, a Twin, was slain.

v. 413. Of *Thibæan Strain*] Though I have not translated the Epithets annexed to *Nomius*, *Mimas*, *Lycetus*, and other doughty Heroes, as they convey no particular Idea, yet I could not pass over that of *Thibæan*, which belongs to *Licbas*, after the strenuous Endeavours of the learned Commentator *Gronovius* to settle it thus. I shall transcribe his Conjectures as well for the Entertainment of my Readers, as a Sanction to my adopting this particular Epithet in my Version.

" In most of the MSS. it is *Thæbeumque Licban*. Some will have  
 " it to be *Phæbeumque* or *Phæleumque*; but the Adjective *Thæbeus*  
 " for *Thèbanus* is new and too much a Grecism. I have found at  
 " Length in one Book, *Thibæumque*, and that is the true Reading.  
 " In this very Book one is killed by *Parthænopus*, quem candida  
 " *Thisbe miserat*. You have in the 2d Iliad, in the Catalogue of the  
 " *Bæotians*, πολυτρημένα τε Θίβην. Ovid 2 Met. *Quæ nunc Thibæis*  
*agitata mutata columbas*.

v. 418. To thy sad Parents henceforth better known.] The Poet here, though somewhat obscurely, hints at the following Verses of *Virgil* and *Lucan*, who imitated him.

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To rash *Panemus* then he cries.—Yet live, 415  
 And thy sad Brother's helpless Fate survive :  
 To the dire Walls of *Thebes* depart alone,  
 To thy sad Parents henceforth better known.  
 'Tis well, ye Gods, that with her bloody Hand  
*Bellona* chang'd the Combat from the Land 420  
 To this same River, since the timid Throng  
 Is by their own *Ismenos* drag'd along.  
 Nor *Tydeus*' Shade shall wail around your Fire,  
 Debarr'd of what his Country's Rites require,  
 But Earth resolve him to his pristine State ; 425  
 While you shall prove a far more rig'rous Fate,  
 The Fishes' Prey.—Such Taunts he deals around,  
 And with harsh Words embitters ev'ry Wound.  
 Now at the Foe the floating Darts he throws,  
 Then with his Falchion aims wide slaught'ring Blows.  
*Tberon*, a Comrade of the sylvan Maid, 431  
 And rustic *Gyas* felt his thrilling Blade :  
*Erginus*, skill'd in naval Arts, he slew,  
*Herfes*, who ne'er the Rites of Tonsure knew,  
 And *Cretheus*, bold Advent'rer on the Main, 435  
 Who, in the Depth of Winter's dreary Reign,  
 Had often past *Eubæa*'s highest Cliff,  
 The dread *Caphareus*, in a slender Skiff.

*Daucla Laride, Thymberque simillima proles,  
 Indiscreta suis gratulque parentibus error,  
 At nunc dura dedit vobis discrimina Pallas.* *Æneid* 10.

*Stant gemini fratres, secundæ gloria matris,  
 Quos eadem variis genuerunt viscera fati:  
 Discrevit mors sæva viros : unumque relictum  
 Agnorunt miseri, sublato errore, parentes.*

*Pharsalia Lib. 3.*

What cannot Fate atchieve?—transfix'd his Breast,  
On Waves he floats, a Terror to the rest. 440

While gay *Pharsalus* o'er the liquid Plain  
Guides his high Car, to seek his social Train,  
A *Doric* Javelin, hissing from afar,  
Precipitates the Vaunter from his Car.

Th' incumb'ring Juncture of the Chariot-Beam 445  
Immers'd the Steeds beneath the rapid Stream.

Ye learned Nine, who make such Themes your Care,  
Indulge my Thirst of Knowledge, and declare,  
What watry Toils the *Grecian* Prince engag'd,  
And why in obvious Arms *Ismenos* rag'd? 450

'Tis your's to vindicate the Voice of Fame,  
And trace it to the Source from whence it came.  
*Crenæus* (as preceding Bards have sung)  
From fair *Ismenis*, and a Satyr sprung,  
With youthful Spirits flush'd, and vig'rous Blood, 455  
Rejoic'd to war in his maternal Flood.

The Bank his Cradle, there he first drew Breath,  
And there, the Bank his Grave, he found his Death.  
Presuming, that the Furies here employ  
Their Arts in vain, with more than wonted Joy 460  
He passes now the flatt'ring River o'er,  
And fords alternately from Shore to Shore.

v. 447. *Ye learned Nine* !] The Poet's stopping abruptly in his Relation, and breaking out in this solemn Address to the Muses, alarms the Reader, and greatly raises his Attention: but as I have spoken so open and so copiously of the Nature and Reason of these extraordinary Invocations, I shall take no farther Notice of them. See the Note on the 41st and 935th Verses of the 4th Book.

453. *Crenæus*] The Motive of *Ismenos*'s Rage against *Hippomedon* was the same as that of *Xanthus*'s against *Achilles*: the former slew *Crenæus*, and the latter *Asteropæus*, who were both Favourites of the two River-Gods above-mentioned.



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If down, or cross the Stream he takes his Way,  
 The Waves assist him ; nor his Progress stay,  
 When obvious to the driving Tide he goes ; 465  
 But back with him th' obsequious Current flows.  
 Not with more Care the circling Deeps defend  
 The Body of their *Antbedonian* Friend :  
 Thus *Triton* labours to compose the Main,  
 When to his Mother's kind Embrace again 470  
*Palemon* hastes, and as he moves along,  
 Strikes the slow Dolphin with his sounding Thong.  
 Array'd in golden Panoply, he fought,  
 The *Theban* Story on his Target wrought.  
 Here (while no Fears disturb her tender Breast) 475  
 Fair to the View, the *Tyrian* Damsel press'd  
 The Bull's white Back : no more her Fingers hold  
 His beauteous Horns ; in curling Billows roll'd,  
 The sportive Sea her Feet, exulting, laves,  
 You'd think the Lover swims and cuts the Waves. 480  
 The Water firms our Faith, nor does the Stream  
 Of Colour different from main Ocean seem.  
 Now at *Hippomedon* he boldly aims  
 His Darts, and with exulting Voice exclaims.  
 No Poisons of *Lernean* Rankness stain 485  
 Our Riv'lets, nor *Herculean* Serpents drain.  
 This violated Stream (as thou shalt prove)  
 Is doubly sacred to the Pow'rs above.

v. 475. *Here (while no Fears)* I cannot help thinking with the Editor of *Pitt's Virgil*, that *Statius* has indulged his Fancy too much in describing Shields of this Sort ; and here by the Way, that Gentleman observes, that our Author's Genius seems to be particularly suited to such Kinds of Description,

Without Reply the Chief against him goes,  
 Whilst in his Offspring's Aid the River rose, 490  
 And check'd his Hand, which yet discharg'd a Wound  
 The piercing Lance Life's warm Recesses found.  
 The daring Mischief terrify'd the Flood,  
 And Streams of Grief distill'd from either Wood;  
 Each hollow Bank with deeper Murmurs rung, 495  
 While the last Sound, that linger'd on his Tongue,  
 Was Mother, Mother.—Here he ceas'd: the rest  
 The whelming Surge with hideous Roar suppress.  
*Ismenis*, compass'd with her Nymphs around,  
 Springs from her Cavern with a furious Bound, 500  
 Her Hair dishevell'd, rends her Sea-green Vest,  
 And marring with frequent Stripes her Face and Breast.  
 Soon as above the Waves she lifts her Eyes,  
 Her Son she calls with unavailing Cries:  
 One Token of his Death is seen alone, 505  
 The Shield too well by his sad Parent known.  
 Far off he lies, where bellowing down the Steep,  
*Ismenos* disembogues into the Deep  
 His Streams.—Thus the deserted *Halcyon* groans,  
 And her wet Dome, and floating Nest bemoans, 510

v. 589. *Without Reply*] This Silence is more expressive of true Valour, and more consistent with the real Character of a Hero than the most bitter and satyrical Retort could have been. A brave Man is always more ready to justify himself by Deeds than Words. Thus the great *Hector*, when accused of Cowardice by *Sarpedon*, does not stay to make any Answer, but rushes among his Enemies to give the Accuser ocular Demonstration of his Courage, and make him ashamed of his unjust Imputation.

v. 509. *Thus the deserted Halcyon groans*] *Statius* with a Propriety rarely to be found (as I have already remarked in the Simile of the Dolphin) frequently shifts the Subject of his Comparisons with the Element, and descends to the very Minutiae of Similitude. A Poet, of less Taste and Fancy would have been content to have illustrated the

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When the relentless South, and envious Flood  
 Have borne away to Sea her feather'd Brood.  
 Again the childless Matron dives, and hides  
 Her well-turn'd Limbs beneath the circling Tides ;  
 Thro' many a liquid Path she takes her Way, 515  
 Which far beneath the glassy Surface lay.  
 In vain the wretched Warrior's Corse she seeks,  
 And in loud Plaints her Agony bespeaks :  
 The dreadful River oft obstructs her View,  
 Its Colour darken'd to a sanguine Hue. 520  
 Headlong on missive Weapons now she lights,  
 And Faulchions, blunted in repeated Fights,  
 Then handles Helms, disguis'd with Clefts and Gore,  
 And turns the mangled Bodies o'er and o'er.  
 Nor from the briny Deeps did she retire 525  
 To bitter *Doris*, till the pitying Choir  
 Of *Nereids* saw him floating on the Main,  
 And shov'd him to her longing Arms again.  
 She clasps as still alive, and with her Hand  
 Extends his Body on the grassy Strand ; 530  
 With her soft Hair his humid Visage dries,  
 And adds these Words, a Sequel to her Cries.  
 Say, did *Ismenos* of immortal Line,  
 And thy great Parents this sad Lot assign ?  
 Thus dost thou exercise supreme Command, 535  
 And rule our River ?——In a foreign Land

the Sorrow of *Ismenos* by that of a Swallow, a Nightingale, or any other Bird for the Loss of her young ; but our Author very judiciously takes in the Circumstance of her being a Water-Nymph, and compares her to the *Halcyon*, which always builds her Nest on the Banks of the Sea, or large Rivers.

More safe thou'dst been, more safe on hostile Shores,  
 And the salt Wave of *Neptune*; that restores  
 Thy Body, all deform'd in cruel Fight,  
 And with thy Presence glads and shocks my Sight. 540  
 Are these thy Father's Eyes, is this my Face,  
 And did such Locks thy Grandfire's Shoulders grace?  
 Art thou that Youth, who late conspicuous stood,  
 Pride of the Stream, and Glory of the Wood?  
 No more attended by my Nymphs, I move 545  
 Queen of the Flood, and Goddess of the Grove.  
 Where are those frequent Suitors, that of late  
 Were seen to press around thy Mother's Gate;  
 And Nymphs contending who should serve thee most?  
 Why should I now inter thee on the Coast, 550  
 And not in my Embrace?—O had I dy'd  
 O'erwhelm'd amidst the Roarings of the Tide!  
 Does not such Slaughter, O thrice rigid Sire!  
 With Pity and with Shame thy Breast inspire?  
 What Lake, in this thy Daughter's dire Distress, 555  
 Conceals thee thus, whose deep and dark recess

v. 544. *Pride of the Stream*] *Crenæus* was Prince of the Stream by Right of his Grandfather *Ismenos*, and of the Grove by Virtue of being the Son of the Faun or Satyr.

545. *No more attended*] There is a wide Difference between the Lamentations of *Ismenis* and other Mothers for the Loss of their Children. She chiefly laments, that all her Honours must cease with his Death. The Prospect of this supercedes all other Considerations, and seems to affect her in a more particular Manner. In short, she mourns in as womanish a Manner as *Eve*, when *Michael* denounces her Departure from *Eden*.

Must I thus leave thee Paradise? thus leave  
 Thee, native Soil, those happy Walks and Shades,  
 Fit Haunt of Gods? where I had Hope to spend,  
 Quiet, though sad, &c. *Par. Lost*, B. 11. V. 269,

Nor thy now breathless Grandson's early Fate,  
 Nor our Complaints and Groans can penetrate?  
 See still *Hippomedon* thy Godhead braves,  
 And rages, uncontroll'd, amidst thy Waves! 560  
 Unwonted Tremours seize the Banks and Flood,  
 And the ting'd Billows drink *Aonian* Blood.  
 Tho' slow in our Defence, thy ready Aid  
 Attends the *Greeks*.—Yet see due Honours paid  
 To my Son's last Remains; and be it known, 565  
 That soon another's Death thou shalt bemoan.  
 These Words, accompany'd with Tears, she spoke,  
 And stains her gen'rous Breast with many a Stroke.  
 The Sea-green Sisters make her Loss their own,  
 Sigh back her Sighs, and eccho Groan with Groan. 570  
*Ismenos* then lay buried in a Cave,  
 Whence thirsty Clouds and Gales imbibe the Wave,

v. 566. *Soon another's Death thou shalt bemoan*] *Barthius* treats our Author's Want of Thought in this Place with great Humour. *Ismenis* (says he) reproaches her Father as quite ignorant of the Death of his Son and others. But when his Grandson's Fate approached, he opposes his Waves to *Hippomedon*.

—In his Offspring's Aid the River rose,  
 And check'd his Hand.——

Did *Ismenis* do this in a Dream, or did our truly good Author nod over this Passage?—The latter I take to have been the Case.

v. 570. *Sigh back her Sighs*] After this Verse follows a Simile which is so very obscure, and consists of such filthy Images, that I have ventured to omit it by my Friends' Advice.

v. 571. *Ismenos then*] From this Line to the Speech of *Ismenos* to *Jupiter* there runs one continued Chain of Sublimity and Imagery scarce inferior to any Thing I have ever read.——The Picture of the Abode and Habit of this Water-God is superior to *Virgil's* Description of the *Tiber*; and that of the River's Resistance to *Hippomedon* is equal at least in Point of Circumstances and Variety to that of *Xanthus* in the 21st Book of *Homer's Iliad*, against *Achilles*.

Whence with fresh Juice the show'ry Bow is fed,  
 And golden Crops the *Tyrian* Fields o'erspread :  
 But when he heard from far the doleful Sound, 575  
 In which the Murmurs of the Surge were drown'd,  
 He lifts his Neck, with shaggy Moss o'ergrown,  
 And Temples, circled with an icy Crown ;  
 And rushing on, a full-grown Pine o'erturns,  
 As down the Stream he rolls his copious Urns. 580  
 The Woods and lesser Brooks his Progress eye  
 With Wonder, as he leaves his Channel dry.  
 His stony Channel, and with dashing Waves  
 From either Bank the Slime invet'rate laves.  
 Sonorous in his Course, the River roars, 585  
 And foaming, far o'ertops the subject Shores ;  
 While from his Sea-green Beard in many a Rill  
 The lucid Drops upon his Breast distill.  
 One Nymph alone he meets, who soon makes known  
 His Grandson's Fate, and Evils soon his own, 590  
 Presses his Hand, and the fell *Grecian* shews,  
*Hippomedon*, sole Author of his Woes.  
 Suspended in Mid-Air the wrathful Flood  
 Awhile, with all his Waves encircled, stood,  
 Then shook his Horns, with verdant Sedge entwin'd;  
 And thus he vents his Turbulence of Mind. 596  
 Is this, O Ruler of the Gods above,  
 The best Reward my Services must prove ?  
 Wink'd I for this (thyself our honour'd Guest,  
 At Deeds, which Friendship, and not Fear suppress'd)  
 As when a borrow'd Pair of Horns adorn'd 601  
 Thy guilty Brows, or *Phæbe* was suborn'd  
 To lengthen out the Night, and (oh ! Disgrace  
 To the whole Sex, and all the *Theban* Race)

BOOK IX. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 431

Proud *Semele* to *Juno*'s Rank aspir'd, 605  
 And for a Dow'r ethereal Flames requir'd.  
 Was it so slight a Favour to defend  
 Thy foster'd Offspring, and their Youth befriend?  
 For Refuge to this Stream *Tyrinthius* came,  
 And here, O *Bacchus*, temper'd we thy Flame. 610  
 Behold! what Heaps of Carnage choak my Stream,  
 What shiver'd Weapons on my Surface gleam!  
 War rages thro' our Ford, the Billows breathe  
 Confusion, Rout and Death: above, beneath  
 Souls wander, recent from their bloody Doom, 615  
 And hov'ring, spread o'er either Bank a Gloom.  
 All Votaries invoke my chrystal Wave  
 With holy Yellings: 'tis my Praise to lave  
 In the clear Stream great *Bacchus*' sacred Horns,  
 And the soft *Tbyrsus* that his Head adorns. 620  
 In vain I seek the Straits.—Not *Strymon*'s Flood,  
 Dire as it seems, is thus deform'd with Blood;  
 Nor foaming *Hebrus* bears the Stain of Gore  
 So deep, when warring *Mars* invades the Shore.  
 Remember, that the Stream which now demands 625  
*Jove*'s timely Aid, deserves it at his Hands.  
 Does *Bacchus* blot his Parents from his Mind,  
 Or is *Hydaspes* more to Peace inclin'd?  
 Nor thou, whom the gay Spoils and Trophies, torn  
 From brave *Crenæus*, hapless Boy, adorn. 630  
 Shalt pay to *Inachus* the votive Crown,  
 Or hail with conq'ring Shouts thy native Town,

v. 621. Not *Strymon*'s Flood] *Strymon* and *Hebrus* are two Rivers of *Thrace*: the one famous for the Battles between the Pygmies and Cranes, and the other for those of *Mars*.

Unless, the mortal Progeny of Earth  
 I prove, and more than human is thy Birth.  
 Raging he spake, and to the ready Wave 635  
 A Token of his vengeful Purpose gave.  
 First bleak *Cithæron* from his hoary Brows  
 Pours many a Rill of long collected Snows ;  
*Asopus* then by Stealth his Wants supplies  
 With Streams, that from his op'ning Springs arise. 640  
 The scrutinizing God himself explores  
 Earth's hollow Entrails, and recruits his Stores  
 From Marshes, Pools, and Lakes with Filth o'erspread ;  
 And lifting to the Skies his dropping Head,  
 Exhausts the Clouds of Moisture, and inhales 645  
 The humid Vapours lodg'd in show'ry Gales.  
 And now o'er both his Banks *Ismenos* rose,  
 And all around a foamy Deluge throws.  
*Hippomedon*, who fording half the Tide,  
 Its greatest Depth and utmost Rage had try'd, 650  
 Unbath'd his Shoulders, wonders as he sees  
 The Flood invading them by quick Degrees.  
 Swelling on either Side, the Billows form  
 A watry Bulwark: As when some huge Storm  
 Drains the *Pléiades*, in Winter's Reign, 655  
 And dashes black *Orion* on the Main.  
 Thus the *Theumesian* Stream the Warrior toss'd  
 On its salt Surface: on his Shield imboss'd  
 He breaks his Fury: o'er its Orb he boils  
 With black'ning Foam, and all Resistance foils. 660  
 Though oft repuls'd, in greater Troops again  
 The Surges mount.—The Hero toils in vain,  
 For not content with his own liquid Force,  
 The rapid Current gathers in its Course



Beams, Stones torn from the Bottom, Shrubs that grow  
On the green Verge, and whirls them at the Foe. 666  
Unequal hangs the Fight : more fierce he raves,  
As undismay'd the Chief his Anger braves :

For neither does he turn his Back, or yield  
To any Threats ; but bending to the Field 670

His Steps, still boldly meets the rushing Tides,  
And, with his Shield oppos'd, the Flood divides.

His Feet upheld, still with the moving Ground  
He moves, the slipp'ry Pebbles floating round,  
And struggles, while his Knees relax'd with Toil, 675  
Far from beneath him slides the slimy Soil.

*Ifmenos* say, (th' upbraiding Warrior cries)  
From whence these sudden Gusts of Passion rise ?  
Whence hast thou drawn this Strength ? some mightier  
Friend

Than *Bacchus* must thy desp'rate Cause defend : 680

For, till the present War, thy peaceful Flood  
Was never crimson'd but with Female Blood,

When Pipes unequal at your Orgies roar,  
And madd'ning Matrons stain your Rites with Gore.

He said : and now the Pow'r himself appears, 685  
And o'er the Waves his Head spontaneous rears.

A Load of Filth to his marr'd Visage clung,  
Mute was his Rage, and silent was his Tongue.

Now Face to Face the God and Hero stood,  
When, rising to the Stroke, the furious Flood 690

Impell'd a leafless Oak : Four Times unmov'd  
The dire Assault and thund'ring Shock he prov'd :

At length, his Shield struck down, the Chief withdrew  
By tardy Steps, the Billows thick pursue,

Back'd by their Leader ; while with hissing Sound, 695  
 A Show'r of Darts and Stones is rain'd around,  
 And rang'd along the Beach his *Theban* Foes.  
 His Landing with protended Arms oppose.  
 What can he do, besieg'd with Waves and Spears ?  
 Nor Hope of Flight, nor glorious Death appears. 700  
 Just on the Brink ('twas doubtful if it stood  
 Fix'd on the Land, or rooted in the Flood)  
 An Ash with far-projecting Branches grew,  
 And o'er the Stream a Shade wide-spreading threw.  
 Hither he sped his Course in quest of Aid, 705  
 (For how could he the guarded Beach invade ?)  
 And snatch'd a Branch, his slidd'ring Steps to stay,  
 But, faithless to his Grasp, the Tree gives Way,  
 Beneath his dragging Weight uprooted falls,  
 An earthy Fragment in the Water hales, 710  
 Torn from the Border, and from Side to Side  
 In Length extended, bridges the rough Tide.  
 Herè meet the rushing Waves ; the settling Mud  
 Sinks to the Bottom.—Now the circling Flood

v. 701. *Just on the Brink*] This beautiful Incident is borrowed from the 21st Book of the *Iliad*, but diversified and enlarged with many additional Circumstances.

———'Ο δὲ πτελέων ἔλε χροῖν  
 Εὐφύια, μαζάλλω, ἡ δ' οὐκ ῥέων ἐραπῦσα  
 Κρημὸν ἀπασσε διῶσι, ἐπίχρ' δὲ καλὰ ριάνθη  
 "Οὔρεσσιν ποταμίῳ, χαφύρασσιν δὲ μιν αὐτῶν,  
 Εἶσω πᾶρ' ἐραπῦς. ———

Some of the Verses (as Mr. *Pope* has observed of *Homer's*) run hoarse, full, and sonorous, like the Torrent they describe ; others by their broken Cadences and sudden Stops, image the Difficulty, Labour and Interruption of the Hero's March against it. The Fall of the Tree, the tearing up of the Bank, the rushing of the Branches in the Water, are all put into such Words, that almost every Letter corresponds in its Sound, and echoes to the Sense in this Particular.

# BOOK IX. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 435

Invades the Neck and Shoulders of the Chief: 715

At length, oppress'd with more than vulgar Grief,

He cries :—O *Mars*, shall I resign my Breath

In this vile River? such inglorious Death

Attends the Swain, whom to the neighb'ring Deep's,

Increas'd by sudden Show'rs, a Torrent sweeps. 720

Why fell I not beneath the hostile Sword?

*Argos* had then wept o'er my Corse restor'd.

Mov'd by these Pray'rs, at length *Saturnia* seeks

The Courts of *Jove*, and thus her Spouse bespeaks.

How long, illustrious Sire of Gods above, 725

Shall wretched *Greece* thy studied Vengeance prove?

By *Pallas* hated, *Tydeus* press'd the Plain,

And silent *Delphos* wails her Augur slain.

Say, shall *Hippomedon* whose native Place

Is *Argos*, sprung of fam'd *Mycenæ's* Race, 730

v. 717. O *Mars*, shall I resign my Breath] The Behaviour and Speech of *Hippomedon* have so many Precedents, that I should not know from what Original it is copied, had not the Poet himself left a Mark of Distinction, which is the Allusion to the Shepherd.

Ἄσ μ' ἄφελ' Ἐκτωρ κτεῖναι, ὅς ἐνθάδ' ἰτέρῃ ἄλειψ'·  
 Τὰν ἀγαθὸν μὲν ἔπιφν', ἀγαθὸς δὲ κτεῖν' ἐξινάειζ'·  
 Νῦν δὲ με λούζαλιν θανάτῳ εἰμαρτοῖο ἀλόναι  
 Ἐρχθέντ' ἐν μεγάλῃ ποταμῷ, ὡς παῖδα συφοροῦν,  
 Ὅτ' ἴα τ' ἵναυλ' ἀποιρσιν χαιμῶνι πικρῶντα.

*Homer* again in his *Odyssey*, *Virgil* and *Lucan* have all similar Passages in their respective Works; which Circumstance, I think, sufficiently clears up the two former from the Imputation of having represented their Heroes as Cowards. They do not lament, that they must die, but only dislike the Mode of Death. Drowning, it was thought by the Ancients, hindered their Bodies from being buried: we must not wonder, therefore, that they abominated it, as they could not be admitted into the Number of the blessed, until they had received the funeral Rites.—See *Palinurus's* Speech to *Æneas* in the sixth Book of *Virgil's* *Æneid*.

Deserted by the Pow'r, whose Grace he woo'd,  
 Glut the fell Monsters of the Sea with Food ?  
 The vanquish'd sure have shar'd the fun'ral Rite.  
 Where are the Flames that must succeed the Fight  
 By *Theseus* kindled ?——He receives her Pray'r, 735  
 And makes the Object of her Suit his Care,  
 His Eyes turn'd back on *Thebes*.—The Stream again  
 Sinks at his Nod, and spreads a level Plain.  
 Above the Surface now his Shoulders rise,  
 And Hope returning sparkles in his Eyes 740  
 So, when a Tempest rais'd by Winds, subsides,  
 And *Neptune's* Trident calms the ruffled Tides,  
 The Rocks lift up their Heads to Sight long-lost,  
 And the glad Seamen eye the wish'd-for Coast,  
 Ah ! what avails it to have gain'd the Beach, 745  
 Since still he stands within the Javelin's Reach ?  
 The *Tyrian* Cohorts press on ev'ry Side,  
 No more the Mail and Shield his Body hide ;  
 But the whole Man's expos'd to Death.—The Blood  
 That long had lain congeal'd beneath the Flood, 750  
 Now issues copious, thaw'd in open Air,  
 And all his honest Wounds again lie bare.  
 Drain'd of Life's Juice, relax'd appears each Vein,  
 Nor his chill'd Feet his trembling Frame sustain.  
 He drops ; as from some Mountain's airy Crown, 755  
 Torn by the Winds, a tall Oak tumbles down,

741. *So, when a Tempest*] This is a very elegant Similitude and well-adapted to the Circumstances of the Person. Our Poet would not, as he had before compared him to a Rock for his Fortitude, degrade him in his Distress by illustrating his Situation in a meaner Comparison, and therefore compares him to a Rock again.

Servatur ad imum

Qualis ab incæpto processit, & sibi constat.

v. 755. *As from some Mountain's airy Crown*] *Homer, Virgil, and*  
*Silva*

Which late was seen with shading Boughs to rise,  
 Its Root in Earth, its Summit in the Skies.  
 Whilst, as a Prelude to its Fate, its Head  
 Threatning it nods, the Grove and Mountain dread, 760  
 Left falling, it deform the sylvan Reign,  
 And spread a Length of Ruin on the Plain.  
 Yet no one durst despoil the Chief bereft  
 Of Life : untouch'd his Sword and Helm were left.  
 Scarce trusting to their Eyes, aloof they stand, 765  
 And fear the Blade he clinches in his Hand.  
*Hypsæus* at length their Doubts remov'd, withdrew  
 The Casque and his stern Face disclos'd to View :  
 Then boastful thro' the *Theban* Ranks he goes,  
 And on his Sabre's Point high-glitt'ring shows 770

*Silins italicus* have all Comparisons derived from this Subject, which I shall lay before the Reader, without anticipating his Judgment by any Remarks of my own.

——— Ὅ δ' ἐὼ κενήσῃ χαμαὶ πῶσιν αἰγυῖοις ἄς,  
 Ἥρά τ' ἐὼ ἀκμινῇ ἑλίοιο μεγαλοῖο πεφύκει  
 Λοή, ἀτὰρ τί οἱ ὄζοι ἐπ' ἀκροτάτῃ περύσσει·  
 Τὴν μὲν δ' ἀρματοπηγὸς ἀνὴρ αἰΐδωνι σιδήρῳ,  
 Ἐξίταρ' ὅφρα ἴτοι κάμψῃ ἀεικαλίῃ δίφρῳ,  
 Ἥ μὲν ἄζομένη κῆρυι ποταμοῖο παρ' ὄχλου.

*Iliad. Lib. 4. V. 482.*

Ac veluti in summis antiquam montibus ornum,  
 Cum ferro accisam crebrisque bipennibus instant  
 Eruere agricolæ certatim ; illa usque minatur,  
 Et tremefacta comam concussa vertice nutat ;  
 Vulneribus donec paulatim evicta supremum  
 Ingemuit, traxitque jugis avulsa ruīnam.

*Æneid, Lib. 2 Ver. 626.*

Ceu Zephyrus quatit antiquos ubi flamine lucos,  
 Fronte super tremuli vix tota cacuminis hærens  
 Jactatur, pariter nido luctante volucris.  
 Procubuit tandem multa devicta securi  
 Suffugium infelix miseris, & inhospita quercus,  
 Elisistque virum spatiosa membra ruina.

*Bellum Pun. L. 5.*

The Spoil suspended, and exulting cry'd:  
 Behold the Conq'ror of the bloody Tide,  
 And vow'd Avenger of great *Tydeus* dead,  
*Hippomedon*!—how well his Schemes have sped!  
 Brave *Capaneus* beheld the glorying Chief 775  
 From far, but from the Foe conceal'd his Grief,  
 And as the brandish'd Weapon he survey'd,  
 Accosts it thus:—Be present with your Aid,  
 My Arm and Sword; so ye assist my Stroke,  
 No other Deities I will invoke. 780  
 This said, elate in Thought the Warrior glows,  
 And rushes, self-secure of all his Vows.  
 Now thro' the Shield, which strong Bull-Hides infold,  
 And brazen Mail, all rough with Scales of Gold,  
 The trembling Javelin passes, and arrests 785  
 The Prince, deep-buried in his gen'rous Breasts.  
 He sinks, as some high Tow'r that long hath stood  
*Bellona's* fiercest Shocks, at length subdu'd  
 With oft repeated Strokes it thunders down,  
 And opens to the Foe the fenceless Town. 790  
 Then striding o'er th' expiring Chief, he cries:  
 The Fame of Death we grant thee: lift thine Eyes,  
 And mark th' illustrious Author of the Wound:  
 Go—vaunt of this in the drear *Stygian* Sound.

v. 787. *At some high Tow'r*] Our Author in this Comparison has set the *Theban* Hero in a stronger Light than the *Grecian*.—He illustrates the falling of *Hippomedon* by that of an Oak, but compares *Hypseus* to a Tower, which is more expressive of the Character of a valiant Leader: a Tower being the Defence of a City, as a valiant Commander is of his Army.—This Simile, though not very long, is paraphrased from the Verse of *Homer* subjoined.

“*Ἦτορ δ' αὖτε ὅτε μέγ' ἐν ἰσθμῷ νεκρὸν ὀκλῶν.*”

v. 793. *And mark th' illustrious*] *Aeneas* closes his Address of Commiseration to *Lausus* in much the same boastful Manner.

BOOK IX. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 439

The Sword and Head-piece seiz'd, he takes again 795  
 The Target, wrested from the *Grecian* slain,  
 And placing o'er the Corse, says with a Groan :  
 Receive these hostile Trophies with thy own,  
 And sleep secure, that rescu'd from the Foe,  
 Thy Manes shall the Rites of Burial know. 800  
 But while thy solemn Fun'erals we prepare,  
 Accept this Earnest of my future Care.  
 Thus long the Combat hung in even Scales,  
 And either Host alternately prevails :  
*Mars* aids them both, like an impartial Lord, 805  
 And with commutual Wounds the Battle goar'd.  
 In Turn they mourn the *Greek* and *Theban* Chief,  
 And from each other's Sorrows find Relief.  
 Mean while, disturb'd by Visions of the Night,  
 And Dreams, \* th' *Arcadian* Princess bends her Flight  
 To *Ladon's* gelid Spring, to wash away 811  
 Her noxious Sleep, before the destin'd Day.  
 Loose was her Dress, dishevell'd was her Hair,  
 And, as the Rites requir'd, her Feet were bare.  
 For anxious Thoughts and weighty Cares oppress'd 815  
 Her Mind in Sleep, and broke her nightly Rest.  
 Oft Times the Spoils, which she had sacred made,  
 Torn from the Shrine, or fallen she survey'd :  
 Oft Times she fancied, that expell'd the Groves,  
 In Tombs and Sepulchres unknown she roves, 820  
 And that her Victor Son's return'd again,  
 Yet only sees his Courser, Arms and Train.

Hoc tamen infelix miserum solabere mortem :

*Æneæ* magni dextrâ cadis.

*Æn.* 10. Line 829.

\* *Atalanta*, Mother of *Parthenopæus*.

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Untouch'd the Quivers from her Shoulders fall,  
 And her own Effigies that grac'd the Hall,  
 Was heard to hiss and crackle in the Flames: 825  
 But the past Night the greatest Woes proclaims,  
 T'was this, that fill'd her Soul with anxious Fears,  
 And call'd forth all a Mother's tender Cares.  
 In fair *Arcadia's* blissful Bow'rs there stood  
 A noted Oak: the Nymphs that haunt the Wood, 830  
 Had vow'd it sacred to their Guardian-Maid,  
 And at the Rites divine due Off'rings paid.  
 Here she was wont her Bow and Shafts to place,  
 And high display the Trophies of the Chace,  
 The Lion's brindled Hide its Boughs adorns, 835  
 The Boar's sharp Tusks, and Stag's wide-branching  
 Horns.

Such Honours heap this Monarch of the Grove,  
 That scarce the crowded Limbs have Room to move;  
 While the refulgent Steel destroys the Shade,  
 Dispells the Gloom, and lightens all the Glade. 840  
 As haply from the Hills she took her Way,  
 Tir'd with the longsome Labours of the Day,  
 And in her Hand a Bear's grim Visage bore,  
 Yet warm with Life, and reeking still with Gore,  
 She spies the Foliage strew'd upon the Ground, 845  
 And the hack'd Branches, red with many a Wound.  
 At length a Nymph informs her, *Bacchus* rag'd,  
 Against the *Greeks* with all his Priests engag'd.  
 While, dreaming, thus she groans, and beats her  
 Breast,  
 Sleep quits her Eyes, and from the Couch of Rest, 850  
 Starting as from a Trance, in vain she seeks  
 The pearly Current that bedew'd her Cheeks.



Thrice then she bathes her Tresses in the Stream,  
 T' avert the Mischiefs imag'd in the Dream,  
 Adds magic Sounds, empower'd to controul 855  
 The Mother's Grief, and cheer her anxious Soul,  
 And hast'ning to the weapon'd Virgin's Fane,  
 What Time the Dew-drops glitter on the Plain,  
 Beholds again with Joy the verdant Wood,  
 And the known Oak unchang'd, and free from Blood.  
 Now in the hallow'd Vestible she stands, 861  
 And thus invokes the Pow'r with lifted Hands  
 O sylvan Queen, whose more than female Arms  
 I bear, nor mindful to improve my Charms  
 Like others of my Sex pursue afar 865  
 Thy hardy Steps, and dare the savage War.  
 With Amazons I boast an equal Name,  
 Nor do the *Colcbian* Dames outline my Fame.  
 If to no Rites of *Bacchus* I resort,  
 Nor mix in nightly Choirs and wanton Sport ; 870  
 If true to thee, I wield no wreathed Dart,  
 Nor in unseemly Actions bear a Part,  
 But though defil'd in Hymen's hateful Bed,  
 Pursue the Toils, to which I first was bred,  
 And to the Chace and rural Shades inclin'd, 875  
 For thee reserve a pure, unwedded Mind.  
 Nor in the dark Recesses of the Grove  
 Hid I the Token of my vicious Love,

v. 878. *Hid I the Token of my vicious Love*] The Reader must take Notice, that the Poet only calls this Love vicious, inasmuch as it was a Breach of Vow, all Virgins, who entered into *Diana's* Service, being obliged at their Initiation, to make a Vow of perpetual Virginity.

But

But opening all my Guilt, without Deceit  
 Produc'd the Boy, and plac'd him at thy Feet. 880  
 Nor Blood degen'rate fallies in his Veins;  
 His early Virtue justify'd my Pains :  
 For, when an Infant, he could scarcely go,  
 He stretch'd his little Hands, and lifp'd a Bow :  
 Him (ah! what om'nous Dreams my Soul dismay, 885  
 And damp my ruffled Spirits?) him, I pray,  
 Who trusting to thy Aid (his Mother's Right)  
 In youthful Folly rushes to the Fight,  
 Restore victorious, or (if I demand  
 Too much) uninjur'd to his native Land. 890  
 Here may he toil, and bear thy Arms alone :  
 But O! remove these Signs of Ills unknown.  
 In Bow'rs *Arcadian* why should *Bacchus* reign,  
 And *Theban* Gods encroach on thy Domain ?  
 Why to myself (but may the watchful Throng 895  
 Of Dæmons render this Construction wrong)  
 Take I the Mischiefs, shadow'd in the Oak ?  
 But, if the Gods intend this dreaded Stroke,  
 O mild *Dictynna*, by the Mother's Throes,  
 And yon fraternal Orb that recent glows, 900

v. 896. *Of Dæmons*] I think the Word Dæmons in this Place a more proper Term than Gods, as the former, being a subordinate Class of Deities, were supposed by the Antients to superintend the Affairs of Mankind in a more particular Manner. — In the least Deviation from the Original I shall always hold it incumbent on me to give my Reasons for it.

v. 899. *O mild Dictynna*] If the Reader has any Curiosity to know the Origine of this Name, let him attend to what *Laßantius* says on this Subject. — *Briton*, a *Cretan* Virgin and Daughter of *Mars* was consecrated to *Diana*; and to avoid an attempt made by *Minos* on her Chastity, threw herself into the Sea, and was taken up in Fishing-Nets, which in *Greek* are called *Dißua*. Soon after this the *Cretans* were punished by a heavy Pestilence, that rag'd amongst them, and were informed, that they could not remove it but by building

Transfix me with thy Darts, and set me free;  
 'Tis Ease, 'tis Mercy to a Wretch like me:  
 And, if a martial Death must end his Date,  
 Let him, O let him first bemoan my Fate.  
 Herepaus'd the Queen, and wept; nor wept alone: 905  
 For Tears descended from the sculptur'd Stone.  
 While thus she press'd the sacred Threshold, bare,  
 And brush'd the clay-cold Altars with her Hair;  
 Abruptly the rough Goddess leaves her, flies  
 O'er *Menalos*, high-branching in the Skies, 910  
 Directs her Progress to the *Theban* Town  
 By a bright, inner Path to all unknown  
 But Deities, and from a Point on high  
 O'er Earth's vast Globe extends her boundless Eye.  
 And now near *Helicon's* inspiring Source 915  
 She halts awhile (completed half her Course)

building a Temple to the offended Goddess, which they did, and called it *Dicynæ* from the Fishing-Net.

v. 906. *For Tears descended from the sculptur'd Stone*] The Poet means the marble Statue of *Diana*: *Lucan*, speaking of the Progresses, which preceded the civil Wars, says.

The Face of Grief each marble Statue wears;  
 And *Parian* Gods and Heroes stand in Tears.

v. 908. *And brush'd*] The Words in the Original are;

—— Gelidas verrentem crinibus aras.

In the former Editions it was *verentem*, which *Bernartius* has judiciously altered to *verrentem*, and supported it by the following Quotations.

"*Stratæ passim matres, crinibus templa verrentes, veniam irarum  
 cœlestium exposcunt.* — *Liwy*, Book 3.

"*Matronæ circa deum delubra discurrunt, crinibus passis aras  
 verrentes.* D<sup>o</sup>. Book 26.

"*Tunc Psyche uberi fletu rigans deæ vestigia, humumque ver-  
 rens crinibus suis.* *Apuleius*, Book 5.

"*Matres Italæ pensa manibus abjecerunt, parvos Liberos abrep-  
 tos ad templa traxerunt, ibi ædes sacras passo capillo suo quæque  
 verrebat.* — *Mamertinus*, Panegyrick on *Maximian*.

When through a Cloud far-beaming she discern'd  
 Her Brother from th' *Aonian* War return'd,  
 Uncouth his Visage show'd, disguis'd with Grief,  
 For much he mourn'd the Prophet, luckless Chief. 920  
 More fiercely glow the Planets in Embrace,  
 And paint with crimson Streaks th' ærial Space;  
 Loud clash the Bows, and thro' the Skies around  
 The Quivers eccho back the solemn Sound.

*Apollo* took the Word, and thus bespeaks : 925

Full well I know, my dearest Sister seeks  
 Th' *Arcadian* Youth, who dares beyond his Might,  
 And mixes, fearless, in th' unequal Fight.  
 His Mother sues, and would th' Immortals give  
 Assent to save, the Warrior long should live. 930

Myself (it shames me, that I could not aid,)  
 The Prophet with his Arms and Wreaths survey'd,  
 When urg'd by Fate, he sunk to deepest Hell,  
 And look'd at me for Succour, as he fell.

Nor could I keep my Car, and Earth re-join, 935  
 Tho' stern, nor worthy more of Rites divine.  
 Thou seest my silent Dome, and wailing Cave:  
 This sole Reward my pious Comrades have.

No more my unavailing Help implore;  
 Heav'n wills, we give the fruitless Labour o'er : 940  
 His Hour draws on, the Destinies ordain,  
 Nor are our Oracles believ'd in vain.

Thus all confus'd, the heav'nly Maid reply'd  
 In Turn: his Want of Days then be supply'd  
 With lasting Fame: some Recompence bestow, 945  
 And add in Glory what in Life you owe.

Nor shall he scape unpunish'd for the Deed,  
 By whom Fate dooms the guiltless Chief to bleed,

Our raging Arrows shall avenge the slain,  
 And fix the quiv'ring Dastard to the Plain. 950  
 She ceas'd; nor willing to his Lips applies  
 Her vermil Cheeks, but to the Conflict flies.  
 Now fiercer burns the Fight on either Side,  
 And mutual Vengeance swells the purple Tide  
 For their lost Leaders.—Here the pensive Band 955  
 Of *Hypseus* mourns, depriv'd of his Command;  
 There brave *Hippomedon*'s stout Warriors glow,  
 Nor screen their Bosoms from the menac'd Blow.  
 Fiercely they give, serenely take a Wound,  
 Strive hard to gain, but never quit their Ground. 960  
 In close Array they move, and to their Foes  
 The Seat of Honour, not of Shame expose,  
 When swift *Latonia*, gliding thro' the Skies,  
 On *Dirce*'s Summit stands with watchful Eyes.  
 Beneath her Step the waving Forests nod, 965  
 And quaking Mountains own the present God;

v. 953. *Now fiercer burns the Fight*] There is great Strength of Imagery and Expression in these, and the following Lines; But as I am conscious, my Translation will not make my Assertion good, I shall transcribe the Author's own Words: and in this, as well as in all other Places, where I pass Encomiums, I hope the Reader will always understand them as spoken of the Original.

At pugna creptis major crudescit utrimque  
 Regibus, alternosque ciet vindicta Furores.  
 Hypseos hinc turmæ, desolatæque magistro  
 Agmen, at hinc gravius fremit Hippomedontis adempti  
 Orba cohors. Præbent obnixi pectora ferro:  
 Idem ardor rabidis externum haurire cruorem,  
 Ac fuisse suum: nec se vestigia mutant.  
 Stat cuneo defixa acies, hostique cruento  
 Dant animas, et terga negant. ———

v. 966. *The present God*] Availing myself of the Precedent, which Mr. Pope has given me, I have not scrupled to use the Word God for Goddess in my Version. The Greeks apply *Θεο* indiscriminately  
 for

As when at fruitful *Niobe* she bent  
 Her Shafts, and all her well-stor'd Quiver spent.  
 The youthful Warrior in the Center stood,  
 And gaz'd, exulting, o'er the Scene of Blood. 970  
 A Hunting Steed transports him o'er the Plains,  
 New to the Fight, and Guidance of the Reins;  
 A Tiger's motly Hide his Back o'erspread,  
 And beat with gilded Claws, as on he sped.  
 His neck was musculous, his *Mane*, confin'd 975  
 In twisted Ringlets mocks the fanning Wind.  
 The Poitrel with his snow-white Teeth he champ'd,  
 And with black Spots his dappled Chest was stamp'd.  
 The Rider too in Vests embroider'd shone,  
 (These *Atalanta* wrought, and these alone) 980  
 A costly Robe o'er the gay *Tunic* lies,  
 That twice had drank the noblest *Tyrian* Dyes,  
 Bound in a Chain, with radiant Jaspers strung:  
 The Target from his Steed's left Shoulder hung.  
 His weighty Sword, girt to his tender Side, 985  
 Blaz'd at each Motion with a martial Pride.  
 A golden Clasp the circling Belt confin'd.  
 The Youth exults, as in the passing Wind

for both Genders. Our Poet himself in his fourth Book, speaking of *Diana*, says.

Nec caret umbra Deo.

And the chaste and correct *Virgil* in the second Book of his *Æneid* says;

Descendo, ac ducente Deo, flammam inter et hostes  
 Expedior. —————

v. 969. *The youthful Warrior*] *Statius*, more in the *Ovidian* than *Virgilian* Taste, has given full Reins to his Fancy in describing the Horse, Habit and Person of this juvenile Adventurer, like the ancient Priests, who, before a Sacrifice, trick'd out their Victims with Flowers, Garlands, and such like Ornaments.

BOOK IX. STATIUS's THEBAID. 447

He hears the Sheath, the Quiver that depends, 989  
 And the Chain's Clank, that from his Helm descends,  
 One while he shakes his Casque with Gems inchas'd;  
 And nodding Crest with various Plumage grac'd;  
 But, when his Head is heated, throws for Air  
 His Helm aside, and leaves his Visage bare.  
 More charming then his glossy Ringlets shine, 995  
 His vivid Eyes, that scatter'd Rays divine,  
 And rosy Cheeks, o'er which the Down began  
 But faintly to appear, and promise Man.  
 Nor does he plume himself with Beauty's Praise;  
 But strives to lessen it by various Ways, 1000  
 And knits his Brows, yet Anger cloaths his Face  
 With Majesty, and heightens ev'ry Grace.  
 The *Thebans*, mindful of their Children, yield  
 Their Ground thro' Pity, nor dispute the Field  
 With the Boy-Warrior: he their Flight pursues 1005  
 With Darts, and tempts the Fray, which they refuse.  
 The *Tyrian* Damsels, who behold the Fight  
 From high *Theumesus*, feast their greedy Sight  
 On his fair Features, seen thro' the Disguise  
 Of War, and vent their Flame in secret Sighs. 1010  
 Grief touch'd *Diana's* Bosom, as she ey'd  
 The too rash Youth, ah! how can can I (she cry'd  
 While copious ran the pearly Stream of Woe)  
 Ward off, or e'en delay th' impending Blow?  
 Spontaneous hast thou sought then, cruel Boy, 1015  
 And are the Perils of the Fight thy Joy?  
 Alas! thy early Courage is thy Bane,  
 And Glory spurs thee to the deathful Plain.  
 Scarce till of late thro' the *Menalian* Grove,  
 Without a Guide, securely cou'd'st thou rove; 1020

Nor was it safe to pierce the wood-land Shade  
 And Haunts of Beasts; without thy Mother's Aid,  
 Whose Sylvan Arms, the Quiver, Shafts, and Bow,  
 Thy shoulders scarce suffic'd to bear till now.  
 To our deaf Altars, weeping, she repairs, 1025  
 And wearies Heav'n with unavailing Pray'rs;  
 Whilst in the Toils of Fight thou dost rejoice,  
 And listen, pleas'd, to the shrill Clarion's Voice.  
 Go then, secure of an immortal Crown,  
 And to thy Mother doom'd to die alone. 1030  
 She ceas'd, and his victorious Fame to raise,  
 And crown his Exit with distinguish'd Praise,  
 Rush'd thro' the Lines (a dusky Veil of Clouds  
 From mortal Eyes the bashful Goddess shrowds)  
 And stole the faithless Arrows that he bore, 1035  
 Recruiting th' emptied Quiver with a Store  
 Of ointed Shafts: of these none flies in vain,  
 Nor touches, innocent of Blood, the Plain.  
 She sprinkles then the Warrior and his Horse  
 With Dews ambrosial, lest his wounded Corse 1040

v. 1039. *She sprinkles then the Warrior*] This Fiction is imitated from *Homer's Iliad*, Book the 6th, where *Apollo* discharges the same kind Office to *Sarpedon*:

Οὐδ' ἄρα πατὴρ ἀνγκάσσει Ἀπόλλων  
 ἢ δὲ κατ' Ἰδαιὼν ὄρεϊν ἱεὺς φύλοπιν αἰνῇ,  
 λυτῖκα δ' οὐ βεβλήναι Σαρπηδόνα δῖον ἄρας  
 Πάλλη ἀπο προφίρῳ λῶσιν ποταμοῖο ρήγτι,  
 Χρῆσιν τ' ἀμβροσίῃ. —————

And again in the 19th;

Πατρίκλῳ δ' αὖτ' ἀμβροσίῃ καὶ νίκταρ ἱερῶν  
 Σταῖσι κατὰ μῆνιν, ἵνα οἱ χροὺς ἔμπεδον αἶψα.

*Virgil* has also imitated it;

— Spargitque salubres  
 Ambrosiæ succos, et odoriferam Panaceam.



Should be abus'd, before he yields his Breath;  
 And, as a Charm to break the Pangs of Death,  
 Adds holy Murmurs, and mysterious Songs,  
 Such as in secret Caves the *Colchian* Throngs  
 She teaches, at the Season of Repose, 1045  
 And shews each noxious Plant and Herb that grows.  
 More furious now he deals his Shafts around,  
 To Reason deaf: his Wrath no Limits bound;  
 But, mindless of his Country, Self, and Friends,  
 The fated Darts without Reserve he sends. 1050  
 The youthful Lion thus, whose tender Age  
 Was nurs'd with Blood, the Source of savage Rage,  
 By his *Gatulian* Dam, when he surveys  
 The Mane, that o'er his Neck redundant plays  
 And his sharp Claws, protended for the Fight, 1055  
 He springs forth, conscious of his nat'ral Right  
 From the loath'd Den, and with a sour Disdain  
 Of proffer'd Food, explores his new Domain.  
 Say, valiant Youth, who press'd their native Mead,  
 By thy *Parrhasian* Bow to Death decreed? 1060

v. 1051. *The youthful Lion*] This Simile is a strong Proof of the Fruitfulness of the Poet's Imagination, and judicious Taste. It is bold with Correctness, natural without being vulgar, and copious without Prolixity: and what is still adding to its Merit, is that it is an Original.

v. 1059. *Say, valiant Youth*] This beautiful Interrogation is imitated from the 16th Book of the *Iliad*.

Ἔρην τίμω πρῶτον, τίμω δ' ὕστατον ἐξαιρέτας  
 Πατρίδας, ὅτε δὴ σὺ θεοὶ θύμῳ δι' ἀλέσσω.

*Virgil* has also copied it;

Quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera Virgo!  
 Dejicis? aut quot humi morientia corpora fundis?

I shall transcribe Mr. *Pope's* judicious Observations on the above-  
 cited Passage in *Homer*, as they are equally applicable to our Au-  
 thor. — The Poet in a very moving and solemn Way turns his  
 Discourse

*Chorabus* of *Tanagra* spurn'd the Field  
 The first. Between the Margin of the Shield  
 And Helm, the Dart a narrow Passage found :  
 His Jaws are crimson'd with the gulshing Wound,  
 And o'er his Face the sacred Venom glows, 1065  
 Wide-spreading.——At *Eurytion* then he throws  
 A triple-pointed Shaft : the Weapon flies,  
 And deep in his left Eye-ball buried lies.  
 The Dart extracted from the Wound by Force,  
 Against the Foe *Eurytion* bends his Course ; 1070  
 But ah ! what cannot heav'nly Shafts ?——again,  
 An Arrow speeds, unerring, o'er the Plain,  
 And doubles his Distress : yet still the Foe  
 He chac'd, as far as Memory could go ;  
 Then fell, and *Ida* crush'd, who near him stood : 1075  
 Here, midst the Rage of War and Scene of Blood,  
 In thick short Sobs he gasps away his Breath,  
 Devoting Friends and Foes alike to Death.  
 The Sons of *Abas* next his Fury prove ;  
*Cydon*, subservient to th' incestuous Love 1080  
 Of his sad Sister, and fair *Argus* fam'd  
 For his sleek Hair.——Pierc'd by a Lance well-aim'd,  
 Young *Cydon*'s Parts obscene lie bare to View ;  
 A Dart oblique thro' t'other's Temples flew.

Discourse to *Patroclus*. He does not accost his *Muse*, as it is usual with him to do, but enquires of the Hero himself, who was the first, and who the last, who fell by his Hand ? This Address distinguishes and signalizes *Patroclus*, (to whom *Homer* uses it more frequently, than I remember on any other Occasion ? as if he was some Genius or divine Being, and at the same time it is very pathetic, and apt to move our Compassion.

v. 1083. *Young Cydon's Parts obscene lie bare to View.* Our Author makes the incestuous *Cydon* punished in that Part, with which he had offended. This is poetical Justice in the strictest Sense of the Word.

BOOK IX. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 451

In one the Steel, in one the Feather's seen, 1085  
 The Blood flows down from both, and stains the Green.  
 On all alike th' impartial Darts descend  
 His peerless Charms gay *Lamus* ill defend;  
 Young *Aeolus* fills an untimely Grave:  
 Nor cou'd his mitred Honours *Lygdus* save. 1090  
 Fair *Lamus* mourns his Face: a Lance impales  
 The Groin of *Lygdus*: *Aeolus* bewails  
 His snowy Brows:—The first unhappy Swain  
~~Euboea~~ own'd: on *Thibbe's* rocky Plain  
 The second dwelt: the third *Amycle* bore, 1095  
 Yet never, never shall behold him more.  
 Such is his Art, no Missile flies in vain,  
 And such their Force, that all they wound, are slain.  
 His Hand ne'er rests, but shaft to shaft succeeds,  
 And the long *Phis* runs echoing o'er the Meads. 1100  
 T'was almost past Belief, a single Bow,  
 And one weak Hand cou'd work such mighty Woe.  
 Where least the Foe suspects, his Darts he sends;  
 And oft, in Act to shoot, his Arms extends,  
 Then sudden quits the Mark: when they draw nigh,  
 He flies, and turning lets his Arrows fly.] 1106  
 To Vengeance now the Sons of *Cadmus* rise,  
 Wrath in their Breasts, Amazement in their Eyes,  
 And first *Ambion*, sprung of Race divine,  
 (From *Jove* himself he drew his natal Line) 1110

v. 1097. *Such is his Art*] I should be thought too mistrustful of the Reader's Taste, should I point out to him the Beauties of these Lines. My Version, I confess, falls infinitely short of the Original, and indeed the

Solo respicit arcu.

cannot be rendered in our Language with a suitable Dignity.

Unknowing yet, what Carnage had o'erspread  
 The fatal Champaign, thus insulting, said.  
 How long wilt thou protract thy vital Date,  
 O luckless Boy, and gain Delays from Fate?  
 Does Insolence and high Presumption reign 1115  
 In that vile Breast, because thy Foes disdain  
 To take th' Advantage, and in Fight engage  
 With one so far beneath a Soldier's Rage;  
 Hence to thy Equals, and, secure from Harms,  
 At Home act o'er the Fray with mimic Arms: 1120  
 There long enjoy, if War be thy Delight,  
 The Pomp without the Dangers of the Fight,  
 Or, if surviving Glory be thy Aim,  
 We grant, at thy Request, a Death of Fame.  
 Here on his Speech th' impatient Hero broke, 1125  
 And thus in Terms of equal Wrath bespoke.  
 Small as my Strength is, it avails to gain  
 The Palm, and drive the *Thebans* from the Plain.  
 Lives there so much a Boy, as to decline  
 The Strife with you, a soft enervate Line? 1130  
 In me, bold, rough and hardy, thou shalt find  
 A Sample of the whole *Arcadian* Kind:  
 Me no fair Priestess, by her God compress'd,  
 Brought forth to Woe, in the still Hours of Rest,

V. 1131. *In me, bold, rough and hardy*] The latter Part of this  
 Speech is very much like that of *Numanus* in the ninth Book of the  
*Æneid*.

——— Natos ad flumina primum  
 Deferimus, sævoque gelu duramus & undis.  
 Venatu invigilant pueri, sylvasque fatigant:

And again;

Vobis picta croco, & fulgenti murice vestis:  
 Desidiæ cordi; juvat indulgere choreis:  
 Et tunicæ Manicas, & habent redimicula mitræ.

No Spears inverted in our Hands we bear, 1135  
 Nor on our Heads unmanly Turbants wear,  
 Train'd from our Birth, to dare the frozen Flood,  
 Explore the savage Haunts, and range the Wood.  
 To close the whole — (for why should I delay  
 With needless Words the Business of the Fray?) 1140  
 Our Mothers wield the Bow — your slothful Sires  
 Strike hollow Timbrels, and attend the Quires;  
 These Taunts, tho' just, *Amphion* could not hear,  
 But at the Speaker's Mouth directs a Spear  
 Of dreadful Size. — Astonish'd at the Glare, 1145  
 The Courser rears aloft his Feet in Air,  
 And, flound'ring, on one Side his Master cast,  
 Then fell himself; the devious Javelin past.  
 More fierce at this, the Foe unsheath'd his Blade,  
 And rush'd tumultuous: *Cynthia* this survey'd, 1150  
 And, anxious for his Safety, interpos'd,  
 Her Look disguis'd, and Features undisclos'd.  
 Fir'd with chaste Love, and Friendship's holy Flame,  
 Beside him *Dorceus* stood, and shar'd his Fame:  
 To him the Queen consign'd his tender Years, 1155  
 And youthful Wars, the Source of all his Fears.  
 In his resembled Form, and borrow'd Vest  
 The Goddess thus her favour'd Youth address'd.  
 No more, O Prince! Here let thy Fury cease.  
 Enough is giv'n to Vengeance, Fame and *Greece*. 1160  
 Now spare the wretched *Atalanta*, spare  
 Those Guardian-Gods, who make thy Life their Care.

v. 1153. *Fir'd with chaste Love*] Statius seems to have endeavoured by this Distinction to prevent any Suspicions of his Immorality, which *Virgil* lay under from having mentioned in different Parts of his Works the Love of Boys, and young Men with some Degree of Warmth.

The Youth replies : — Indulge this once thy Friend,  
 And wait, till on the Ground my Spear extend  
 This daring Wretch, who equal Weapons bears, 1165  
 Boasts equal Reins, and equal Vestments wears.  
 His Reins shall grace my Steed, his Vests the Door  
 Of *Dian's* Temple, and his feather'd Store  
 My Mother's Quiver. — Weeping *Cynthia* hears  
 Th' insulting Vaunt, and smiles amidst her Tears. 1170  
 This from a distant Quarter of the Skies,  
 Couch'd in th' Embrace of *Mars*, fair *Venus* eyes,  
 And while she sues, recalling to his Mind  
*Harmonia*, and her Offspring left behind,  
 By timely Arts awakes the Grief, suppress'd 1175  
 In the Recesses of his gloomy Breast.  
 Behold, O God of Arms, yon wanton Dame  
 With Mortals mixing in the Field of Fame!  
 How boldly she confines the War's Alarms,  
 And fixes, where she lists, the Strefs of Arms. 1180  
 Yet more — she rages not alike on all;  
 Gall'd by her Darts, the Thebans only fall.  
 The Charge and Sway of Fight to her transferr'd,  
 'Tis thine with Darts to pierce the tim'rous Herd.  
 Fir'd by these just Complaints, the Warrior-God 1185  
 Sprung from her Arms, and to the Combat strode :

v. 1171. *This from a distant Quarter of the Skies* } *Venus* here, as  
 well as in the *Æneid*, takes Advantage of the amorous Fits of her  
 Gallants, to win them over to her Purpose. And exclusive of her  
 Charms, this Speech is very well calculated to procure her what  
 she wanted. Nothing could prevail more with *Mars* than the ap-  
 prehension of an Encroachment upon his Prerogative: and these  
 two Lines in particular are very humorous and witty.

The Charge and Sway of Fight to her transferr'd,  
 'Tis thine with Darts to pierce the tim'rous Herd.

His other Furies toiling at the Fray,  
 Anger alone attends him in the Way.  
 He checks the Goddess in her rapid Course,  
 And from the Fight deters with menac'd Force. 1190  
 The Fates to *Cynthia* diff'rent Wars decree;  
 The Field of Battel is no Sphere for thee:  
 Then quit it; or by *Styx* thou soon shalt know,  
 Not *Pallas* 'self is a more dreadful Foe.  
 What can she do? — Here threat'ning *Mars* withstands,  
 There Fate, a loaded Distaff in her Hands;  
 While *Jove* leans from the Stars, all stern to view.  
 Through Rev'rence then the bashful Pow'r withdrew.  
 Now thro' the *Theban* Lines *Mars* darts his Eyes,  
 And *Dryas*, sprung from great *Orion*, spies; 1200  
 Him, for his Hatred to the *Sylvan* Dame,  
 He singles out, and sets his Soul on Flame.  
 More furious now against the Race abhorr'd,  
 He slays th' *Arcadians*, and disarms their Lord.  
*Cyllene's* Bands, and *Tegea's* hardy Swains 1205  
 In long Rows slaughter'd, press the sanguine Plains,  
 Th' *Ægyptian* Chiefs, and Troops of *Pheneum* fly:  
 Man falls on Man, and all or yield or die.  
 Th' *Arcadian* Prince himself he next pursues  
 With Hopes of Vengeance, though his Hands refuse  
 To toss the Lance. — He wheeling, shifts his Course,  
 And dreads the Giant-Chiefs superior Force.  
 Presages dire the lab'ring Chief oppress,  
 Unman his Soul, and heighten his Distress.

v. 1200. Sprung from great Orion] Orion was stung to Death by a Scorpion on Diana's Account. It was therefore very judicious in the Poet to make *Dryas* his Son.

And now the real *Dorceus* he descri'd 1215  
 Sorrowing : a faithful few remain'd beside.  
 His Strength recedes, and, as the Quiver grew  
 More light, his Want of Shafts he quickly knew.  
 Less easy now the Weight of Arms he bears,  
 And to himself a Boy at length appears : 1220  
 But, when he view'd the hostile Buckler's Flame,  
 A sudden Tremour shot through all his Frame.  
 As when a Swan surveys the Bird of *Jove*,  
 For Prey descending from his Walks above,  
 She seeks some Cavern, and with Fear deprest, 1225  
 Claps close her quiv'ring Pinions to her Breast.  
 Thus when *Parthenopæus* near discerns  
 His Foe's Gigantic Size, his Anger turns  
 To deathful Horror : yet he still relies  
 On Arms, and fixing on the Heav'ns his Eyes, 1230  
 Invokes his Patroness, and aims a Blow,  
 The forky Weapon fitted to the Bow.  
 Now with full Force he bends the stubborn Yew,  
 The String approach'd his Breast, so close he drew,

v. 1223. *As when a Swan surveys the Bird of Jove*] This similitude is very expressive of the Terror and Consternation of *Parthenopæus*. *Homer* in the 21st of his *Iliad* has one something like it, where he compares *Diana*, afraid of *Juno*, to a Dove afraid of a Falcon.

Δακρυόεσσα δ' ἵππεται διὰ φόβον ὥς ψίλαια,  
 ἥρως δ' ὑπ' ἰσηκευ κοίλῃ εισέπτατο πύτρῃ  
 Σηφεμίν, οὐδ' ἄρα τῇ γει ἀλώμεναι αἰσιμον ἦεν. v. 493.

v. 1233. *Now with full Force*] The Posture and Attitude of the Shooter are painted in a very lively and beautiful Manner. *Dryas* pierces his Enemy near the Articulation of the Arm and Shoulder, so that the former loses all it's strength.—This is a just Representation of the Consequence of such a Wound, and I believe, every one will readily allow this Passage to be a speaking Picture.

And



Book IX. STATIUS's THEBAID. 457

And the far distant Horns already join'd, 1235  
 Drawn to an Arch: when swifter than the Wind,  
 Th' *Aonian* Javelin obvious flies, and broke  
 The sounding String: his Arm beneath the Stroke  
 Is numb'd, and guiltless of th' intended Wound,  
 The Bow unbent, the Shaft drops on the Ground, 1240  
 At length, in Height of agonizing Pain,  
 He quits the Reins, and Weapons, grasp'd in vain,  
 (For through his Mail the Spear had wing'd it's  
 Flight,  
 Just where the Shoulder and the Arm unite)  
 When lo! a second Lance, impell'd with Force, 1245  
 Transpierc'd the Courser's Knee, and stops his  
 Course.

Then haughty *Dryas* (wonderful to tell!)  
 Unconscious of the Hand, by which he fell,  
 Himself was slain: Nor was the Weapon found,  
 And daring Author of so great a Wound. 1250  
 But his sad Comrades on an ample Shield  
 Remove the youthful Hero from the Field,  
 Who grieves not for himself, but for his Steed:  
 O early Age for such a glorious Deed! 1254  
 His beauteous Face grows wan, his Helm unty'd,  
 And on his trembling Cheeks the Graces died.  
 Thrice did they raise his Head, and thrice depress'd,  
 His Neck reclines upon his snowy Breast;  
 Down which (Oh! ruthless Vengeance of his Foes!)  
 The gushing Blood in purple Currents flows. 1260  
 To *Dorceus* now he gave his dying Hand,  
 And sighing, thus address'd his last Command.

Life ebbs apace: but thou with lenient Art  
 Some Solace to my Mother's Grief impart:  
 She in terrific Visions of the Night, 1265  
 In Dreams, or in some Bird's ill-omen'd flight,  
 Has seen my Doom. — Yet study some Pretence,  
 Some pious Frauds to keep her in Suspence.  
 Nor break it suddenly, nor when she stands,  
 The Chace just o'er, with Weapons in her Hands. 1270  
 But these my Words repeat, when forc'd to tell:  
 "O Mother, thro' my own Deserts I fell,  
 "As in Contempt of thee, I fought the Plain,  
 "Thy Pray'rs rejected, thy Dissuasions vain:  
 "And, heedless of thy Counsels, still engag'd, 1275  
 "Where Glory call'd, and where the Combate rag'd.  
 "Live therefore, and thy fruitless Grief resign'd,  
 "Resent, not pity, my too froward Mind.  
 "In vain from fam'd *Lycæus*' snow-capt Brôw,  
 "Thou lookest, anxious, on the Plain below, 1280  
 "If chance some shout reechoes in the Skies,  
 "And Clouds of Dust beneath our Feet arise.  
 "I press a foreign Strand, nor art thou nigh  
 "To catch my parting Breath, and close my Eye.  
 "Yet, honour'd Parent, for the Giver's Sake, 1285  
 "This Lock, in Lieu of the whole Body, take,

¶ 1263. *Life ebbs apace*] The Beginning of this Speech cannot be too much commended for the filial Piety and Affection it displays, and the Simplicity of the latter Part is not disgusting as it comes from the Mouth of so young a Person as *Parthenopæus*, and here I cannot help observing, that the Combate of *Hippomedon* with *Iphinos* is a sublime Piece of Machinery, and the Description of the Exploits and Death of *Parthenopæus* equally tender and affecting. In short there is no Part of the *Thebaid*, that has more Force of Imagination, and a greater Exertion of the inventive Faculties of our Author.

" This thou wast wont to deck, in my Despight,  
" And make the tender Office thy Delight.  
" To this funereal Rites thou shalt assign;  
" And Oh remember, what I now injoin: 1290  
" My sylvan Weapons grant to no Demands,  
" Lest they grow blunt in unexperienc'd Hands:  
" Let my lov'd Hounds enjoy Repose, nor own  
" Another Lord, and feed from Hands unknown:  
" But burn these useless Arms on yonder Plain, 1295  
" Or hang them up in cruel *Cynthia's* Fane.

T H E

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**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE TENTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

*THIS Book opens with an Harangue of Eteocles to his Soldiers, in which he advises them to attack the Grecians' Camp by Night. The Ladies of Argos go in Procession to Juno's Temple, and implore the Blessing of that Goddess upon the Arms of the Allies. She sends Iris to Somnus, to persuade him to set the Thebans in a deep Sleep. This being done, Thiodamas influences the Troops to sally forth, and massacre the Thebans in their Intrenchments. A select party is ordered to accompany him by Adrastus. They make a great Slaughter, and Morning drawing near, devote the Trophies to Apollo, and then retire. Hopleur and Dymas go in quest of the Bodies of Tydeus and Parthenopæus, but are intercepted by Amphion and slain. A party of the Enemy rush into Thebes, and fall victims to their own Rudeness. The Citizens in great Consternation at this Irruption, apply to Tiresias, who informs them, that they can only be saved by the voluntary Death of Menœceus. That Hero, touch'd with Compassion for his Country, first stabs himself, and then leaps off the Tower upon his Enemies. In the mean Time Capaneus exerts himself in a very extraordinary Manner, and having scaled the Walls of Thebes, is struck down and killed by Jupiter with Lightning for his Impiety.*

## THE

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE TENTH.

SOL's Evening Wheels o'erhung th' Hesperian Strand,  
 And dewy night advanc'd at *Jove's* Command,  
 Who from *Olympus* with unpitying Eyes  
 The Rage and Slaughter of the Fight descries;  
 Yet grieves, so many alien Troops shou'd fall 5  
 By Fates unjust before the *Theban* Wall.  
 The Plain unfolds a Scene of Horror. — Here  
 Confus'dly heap'd, Cars, Horses, Arms appear,  
 Dismember'd Heroes, Hearts that beat no more  
 To Glory's Call, and Trunks disguis'd with Gore. 10

v. 1. *Sol's Evening Wheels o'erhung*] As in every just History-Picture (to use the Allusion of *Mr Pope*) there is one principal Figure, to which all the rest refer and are subservient; so in each Battel of the *Thebaid* there is one principal Person, that may properly be called the Hero of that Day and Action. This Conduct preserves the Unity of the Piece, and keeps the Imagination from being distracted and confused with a wild Number of independent Figures, which have no Subordination to each other. In this Particular *Statius* has followed the Example of *Homer*, as the Reader must have observed. In the seventh Book *Amphiaras* is the leading Character, in the eighth *Tydeus*, in the ninth *Hippomedon*, in the eleventh *Polyneices*; and in this, *Capaneus*, whose Death and Exploits with the Description of the Palace of Sleep render this Book equal, if not superiour to any of the preceding.

Then the dishonour'd Host, their Ensigns torn,  
 Withdraw their Bands, with Length of Combate worn:  
 The Gates, unclos'd, admit the lessen'd Train  
 With half the Ease, they sent them to the Plain.  
 They grieve, yet find some Solace to their Grievs, 15  
 As four, the bravest of the *Grecian* Chiefs  
 Were slain.—Their Legions roam without a Guide,  
 Like Vessels tost on Ocean's billowy Tide,  
 Whose Course un-steer'd the Winds and Tempests sway,  
 And Chance conducts them o'er the watry Way. 20  
 From this alone the *Tyrians* bolder grown,  
 No longer fear the Capture of the Town,  
 But hoping Conquest, study to prevent  
 The Foe's Escape, shou'd that be their Intent. 24  
 The Watch-word flies through all th' assembled Host;  
 The Guards, by Turns dispos'd, maintain their Post.  
 By Lot to *Meges*, and to *Lycus* falls  
 The Post of Honour.—Now beneath the Walls  
 At their Command Arms, Food and Fire they bring,  
 Harangu'd, as follows, by the joyful King. 30  
 Assume, ye Vanquishers of *Greece*, ye Rods  
 To scourge the Foes of *Thebes* and of the Gods,  
 Fresh Courage, and your ravish'd Fame retrieve;  
 Nor at this Interval of Darkness grieve,  
 Which bounds our Ire: we'll finish what's begun 35  
 Befere the setting of To-morrow's Sun.  
 See *Lerna's* Glory humbled in the Dust,  
 The Chiefs, in whom she most repos'd her Trust!  
 By vengeful Heav'n her boasted *Tydeus* fell; 39  
 The Seer's black Shade surpriz'd the Pow'rs of Hell,  
 With stern *Hippomedon's* triumphal Spoils  
*Ismenos* swells, nor midst our warlike Toils



Rank we th' Arcadian's Death.—The Premium lies  
 In our own Breasts, and Plunder is our Prize.  
 No more, each at his Cohort's Van, appear 45  
 The sev'n fam'd Crests, or glitter in the Rear.  
 Then fear ye Capaneus, whose Valour's Rage,  
 My Brother's Youth, and th' Argive Monarch's Age?  
 Haste, Warriors, haste, and while intrench'd they lie,  
 Surround with Flames, nor give them time to fly. 50  
 Within our Reach the glorious Conquest stands,  
 And the rich Prey lies ready to our Hands.  
 The *Thebans* thus he fires with promis'd Spoils,  
 And urges to renew their prosp'rous Toils.  
 They turn'd just as they were, nor wash'd away 55  
 The Sweat and Blood of the preceding Day:  
 Their dearest Friends from their Embrace they shook,  
 No Pause they make, and no Enquiries brook.  
 The Troops in sev'ral Parties then divide,  
 And gird the Front, the Back, and either Side 60  
 Of the *Greek* Trench with Flames.—At Depth of Night  
 Thus rav'ning Wolves in hideous Throngs unite,

v. 61. *At Depth of Night*] *Virgil* has an equally fine Simile in his ninth Book, derived from the same Animal.

Ac veluti pleno Lupus infidiatus ovili,  
 Cum fremit ad caulas, ventos perpeffus, & imbres,  
 Nocte faper mediâ: tuti fub matribus agni  
 Balatum exercent: ille afper, & improbus irâ,  
 Sævît in abfentes: collecta fatigat edendi  
 Ex longo rabies, & ficcæ fanguine fauces.

*Taffo* has tranfcribed the firft Part of this Comparifon in the ninth Canto of his *Jerufalem*;

Qual lupo-predatore al' aer bruno  
 Le chiufe mandre, infidiando, aggira,  
 Secco l' avide fauci, e nel digiuno  
 Da nativo odio ftimolato, e d'ira.

And, urg'd with Lust of long-untasted Food,  
 Desert their Haunts, and seek the fleecy Brood.  
 Vain Hope torments their Maws, as in the Gale 65  
 They snuff their Breath, and list'ning at the Pale,  
 Catch their hoarse Bleatings. Stiff at length with Cold,  
 In Impotence of Anger, at the Fold  
 They dart their Claws, and while the Foam runs o'er,  
 Gnash their sharp Teeth, and threat th' obstructing Door.  
 Meanwhile at *Argos* an assembled Train 71  
 Of suppliant Dames proceed to *Juno's* Fane:  
 There, prostrate at her Altars, they implore  
 Her Aid divine, and urge her to restore

v. 71. *Meanwhile at Argos an assembled Train*] This Procession of the Grecian Matrons to the Temple of *Juno*, with their Offerings, and the Ceremonies is copied from the sixth Book of the *Iliad*, where the *Trojan* Women make the same Procession to *Minerva's* Temple.

Αἱ δ' ὅτε τὴν ἱκανοὶ Ἀθήνης εὖ πώλει ἄρη,  
 Τῇσι δούρας αἶψα θειὰν καλλιπάρη,  
 Αἱ δ' ὀλολυγῇ πᾶσαι Ἀθήνη χθῆρας ἀνέχον  
 Ἥδ' ἄρα πώλει ἱλῆσα θειὰν καλλιπάρη.  
 Θῆκιν Ἀθιναίης ἐπὶ γυνάσιν ἠνέματο.

*Virgil* has also introduced it among the Figures in the Picture at *Carthage*. *Æneid*. i. v. 483.

Interea ad templum non æquæ Palladis ibant  
 Crinibus Iliades passis, peplumque ferebant  
 Suppliciter tristes; & tunis pectora palmis.

He has copied it again in the eleventh Book;

Necnon ad templum summasque ad Palladis arces  
 Subvenitur magnâ matrum regina catervâ,  
 Dona ferens  
 Succedunt matres, & templum thure vaporant,  
 Et mœstas alto fundunt de Limine voces.

But I think, our Author's is more conformable to the Christian System; the Worship whereof is grounded more on Love than Fear, and seems directed rather to implore the Assistance and Protection of a benevolent Being, than avert the Malice and Anger of a wrathful and mischievous Dæmon.

Their absent Friends. On the cold Stones they fall, 75  
 They press their Faces to the Doors and Wall,  
 And teach their little Sons Religion's Care.  
 Now sets the Day, consum'd in Vows and Pray'r,  
 And Night succeeds, when heap'd with watchful Fires,  
 Their Altars blaze: the Smoke ascends in Spires. 80  
 A costly Veil too, as a Gift, they brought,  
 No barren Hand the shining Vest had wrought;  
 Rich was it's Texture, and it's every Part  
 Was labour'd o'er with more than vulgar Art.  
 The Ground was purple, glorious to behold, 85  
 With Foliage interwove, and Flow'rs of Gold.  
 There *Juno's* self with Eyes cast downward stands,  
 Betroth'd, not fetter'd yet in nuptial Bands;  
 Asham'd to sink the Sister in the Spouse,  
 Her rosy Cheek with graceful Blushes glows, 90  
 And, yet a Stranger to his furtive Love,  
 She prints sweet Kisses on her youthful *Jove*.  
 With this the sacred Iv'ry they invest,  
 And weeping, thus their humble Suit address,  
 O Queen of Heav'n, and all th' etherial Pow'rs! 95  
 Behold the *Tyrian* Harlot's impious Tow'rs!  
 Burst all her Gates, hurl all her Rampires down,  
 And with new Light'nings blast the guilty Town.  
 How can she act? — She knows the Will of Fate,  
 And fears with *Jove* to enter in Debate; 100  
 Yet sorrows, lest the Gifts of mighty Cost,  
 Their ardent Pray'rs, and Sacrifice be lost.  
 While thus she mus'd, auspicious Chance bestows  
 A Time to aid, and grant their pious Vows.  
 From her bright Throne she sees the Portals clos'd,  
 And wakeful Guards around the Trench dispos'd. 106

Wrath and Revenge her spleenful Bosom strook,  
 And as she mov'd, her Crown terrific shook.  
 Such was her Rage, when from her starry Plain  
 She view'd *Alcmene's* Son with stern Disdain, 110  
 And griev'd, that *Thebes* thou'd bring \*two Bastard-Boys  
 To Light, the Fruits of *Jove's* adult'rous Joys.  
 She dooms the *Thebans* then to Death, who keep  
 The mighty Watch, when lock'd in sudden Sleep:  
 In *Iris* now she vests the whole Command, 115  
 And lodges all the weighty Charge in Hand,  
 Who bends her Progress to the World below,  
 Suspending high in Air her various Bow.  
 Far on the Confines of the western Main,  
 Where *Æthiopia* bounds her wide Domain, 120

\* *Hercules* and *Bacchus*, the former being the Son of *Alcmene*, and the latter of *Semele*.

v. 119. *Far on the Confines*] The Poets have differed in their Accounts of the Situation of this Court of *Morpheus*: *Homar* places it at *Lemnos*, *Ovid* with the *Cimmerians*, a People of *Scythia*, and ours above *Æthiopia*. The Verses marked are some that are not in all the Editions, but which I have rendered on the Authority of *Grævius*. This Description is preferable to that of the Temple of *Mars* in the seventh Book, but rivalled by that of the Palace of this Deity in the 11th Book of the *Metamorphoses*.

Est prope *Cimmerios* longo Spelunca recessu,  
 Mons cavus, ignavi domus, et penetralia Somni;  
 Quo nunquam radiis oriens, mediisque, cadensque  
 Phœbus adire potest. Nebulæ caligine mistæ  
 Exhalantur humo: dubiæque crepuscula lucis.  
 Non vigil ales ibi cristati cantibus oris  
 Evocat Auroram: nec voce silentia rumpunt  
 Sollicitive canes, canibusque fagacior anser.  
 Non fera, non pecudes, non moti flumine rami,  
 Humanæve sonum reddunt convicia linguæ  
 Muta quies habitat. Saxo tamen exit ab imo  
 Rivus aquæ Lethes: per quem olim murmure labens.  
 Invitat somnos crepitantibus unda lapillis.  
 Ante fores antiphaena sacunda papavera florent,  
 Innumeræque herbæ, quarum de lacte soporem

# BOOK X. STATIUS's THEBAID. 469

There stands a Grove, that casts a Shade afar,  
 Impenetrable to the brightest Star,  
 Beneath whose hollow Rocks a Cave descends  
 Of depth immense, and in the Mountain ends.  
 Here all-disposing Nature fix'd th' Abode 125  
 Of *Somnus*, and secur'd the drowzy God.  
 Sloth, who scarce knows an Interval from Sleep,  
 Rest motion-less, and dark Oblivion keep  
 Eternal Sentry at the gloomy Gate:  
 There listless Ease, and awful Silence sate 130  
 With close-contracted Wings, and, still, as Death,  
 Repell the Winds, and hush each Murmur's Breath  
 No rustling Foliage here is heard to move,  
 No feather'd Songsters warble thro' the Grove;  
 No Lightnings glare, no crashing Thunders roar, 135  
 No foamy Waves, rebounding from the Shore.  
 The neighb'ring Stream along the Valley glides,  
 And rolls between the Rocks his noiseless Tides.  
 The sable Herds and Flocks from Food abstain,  
 Or only graze, recumbent on the Plain : 140

Nox legit, et spargit per opacas humida terras.  
 Janua, quæ verso stridorem cardine reddat,  
 Nulla domo toto est; custos in limine nullus.  
 At medio torus est, ebena sublimis in atra,  
 Plumæus, unicolor, pullo velamine testus:  
 Quo cubat ipse Deus, membris languore solutis.  
 Hunc circa passim varias imitantia formas  
 Somnia vana jacent totident, quot messis aristas,  
 Silva gerit frondes, ejectas littus arenas.

I think the *Ovidian* Circumstance of its having no Gates, which might make a Noise by the Turning of their Hinges, is proper enough: but our Author's Account of the greatest Provocatives to Sleep is very just, and a great Improvement on the preceding Description.

Nor stops th' Infection here, but spreads around,  
And withers Herbs just springing from the Ground.

"Within a thousand Statues of the God

"Were grav'd by *Vulcan*. — Here was seen to nod

"Pleasure, with over-acted Joys oppress'd, 143

"And healthful Toil, ne'er physick'd into Rest,

"There Love from am'rous Cares a Respite stole,

"And *Bacchus* snor'd o'er a half-finish'd Bowl.

"Deep, deep within Death, his Half-Brother, lies,

"His Face was void of Terror, clos'd his Eyes. 150

Beneath the Dew-bespangled Cavern lay

The God himself, and doz'd his Cares away.

The Roof was verdant; his own Poppies spread

A Carpet soft, and swell'd the rising Bed.

His Mouth, half-shut, breaths soporific Steams, 155

And his warm Vests exhale the vap'ry Streams.

One Hand sustains his Head; the Horn drops down,

Unheeded, from his other torpid grown.

A thousand various Dreams attend their Chief,

Truths mix'd with Falshood, Joys alloy'd with Grief:

The Sons of Darknes these, and Night's black Hosts,

On Earth they lie, or cleave to Beams and Posts.

Some slender Glimm'rings faintly shine between,

And serve to make the Gloom more clearly seen.

Here, pois'd on equal Pinions, *Iris* flies, 165

And draws a thousand Colours from the Skies.

At her approach the Woods, the Vales below

Smile, and reflect the Radiance of her Bow:

While the dark Dome, struck by her glitt'ring Zone,

Bursts into Light, and Splendors not it's own. 170

Still Proof against th' irradiating Gleams,

And heav'nly Voice, the sluggish Godhead dreams,

Till

Till with fresh Light she strengthen'd ev'ry Ray,  
 And in his Eyes infus'd the golden Day;  
 Then scarce awake, and half unclos'd his Eyes, 175  
 He lifts his Head. — The show'ry Goddess cries.  
 O *Somnus*, gentlest of the Pow'rs above,  
 At *Juno's* Suit, the Sister-Queen of *Jove*,  
 On *Thebes* thy soporific Arts employ,  
 Who, flush'd with Conquest and unruly Joy, 180  
 The *Grecian* Trench beleaguer. — Disobey  
 Thy just Commands, and Night's alternate Sway.  
 Grant her Request then, snatch the Time to please  
 That rarely comes, and wrathful *Jove* appease  
 By means of *Juno's* interceding Aid. — 185  
 This Mandate giv'n, the many-colour'd Maid  
 Ceas'd not, but lest she give her Charge in vain,  
 Thrice shook him, and repeats it o'er again.  
 Thus importun'd the Pow'r of Slumbers nods  
 Assent. The fair attendant of the Gods, 190  
 Clog'd with thick Vapors, quits the dark Domain,  
 And points her Rays, grown blunt with frequent Rain.  
 He too call'd forth his Speed, and active Pow'rs,  
 With blust'ring Winds disturb'd the peaceful Hours,  
 And spreads his Mantle out, contracted, bent, 195  
 And stiffen'd with the freezing Element;

v. 184. *And wrathful Jove appease*] We know not, in what *Somnus* offended *Jupiter*, unless it was in setting him to sleep, in order that *Juno* might shipwreck *Hercules* in his Voyage home from *Troy*, as he himself tells that Goddess in the 14th Book of the *Iliad*.

Ἦτοι ἐγὼ μὲν ἤλξα Διὸς νόον αἰχμήσσω  
 κήδυμ' ἀμφιχυδάς. Σὺ δὲ οἱ κακὰ μέγιστα θυμῷ,  
 Ὅρσος' ἀρραλίην ἀνέμων ἐπὶ πόντῳ αἶσας.  
 Καί μιν ἵππεια Κίον· διὸ κακομήνη ἀπείνεας  
 Νέσφι φίλων πάϊων. ὃ δ' ἐπιγρόμιν' ἁλίπαισι.

Then, bending thro' the Skies his silent Flight,  
O'erhangs the *Tyrian* Plains from Heav'n's mid-  
height.

His Breath alone extends upon the Ground  
Herds, Flocks and Birds, and stills the World around,  
Wheree'er he takes his Way, the Billows slide 201  
From off the Rocks, and howling Storms subside:  
The Clouds condense, the Forests nod on high,  
And falling Stars desert the drowzy Sky.

First sudden Mists, wide spreading o'er the Field, 205  
The Presence of the Deity reveal'd,

Then strait the senseless Dins and Riot cease,  
And the late noisy Camp is hush'd in Peace:  
But, when he stretches out his humid Wings,  
And, circumfus'd in pitchy Darkness, flings 210  
His Poppies far and wide—They roll their Eyes,  
And on the Tongue th' imperfect Accent dies,  
Then from their op'ring Hands, disarm'd by Rest,  
They drop their Shields and Spears: their Heads  
depress

With Weight unwonted on their Bosoms fall.— 215

And now the God of Silence reigns o'er all:  
The Coursers sink to sleep at his Command,  
And sudden Ashes quench'd each flaming Brand.  
But the bland Pow'r of Night (as was injoin'd)  
To *Thebes* alone his opiate Gifts confin'd; 220

From the confed'rate Camps he drives away  
His Mists:—awake, as in the Blaze of Day.  
They stand in Arms, and fir'd with just Disdain,  
Expect the menac'd Fray, and hostile Train.



Lo! chilling Horror creeps thro' all the Breast 325  
Of their sage Prophet, by the God posselt,  
And urges him tumultuous to disclose  
The Fates' Designs upon his Country's Foes.  
Whether this Insight *Phæbus* had inspir'd,  
Or *Juno* with prophetic Fury fir'd, 230  
Dreadful in Voice and Look, he springs abroad,  
By Heav'n's informing Spirit over-aw'd,

v. 225. *Lo! chilling Horror*] Compare this with the following Passages of *Virgil* and *Tryphiodorus*.

Ventum erat ad limen, cum Virgo: "Poscere fata  
"Tempus, ait: Deus, ecce Deus." Cui talia fanti  
Ante Fores, subito non vultus, non color anus,  
Non comptæ mansere comæ: sed pectus anhelum,  
Et rabie fera corda tument, majorque videri,  
Nec mortale sonans: afflata est numine quando  
Tam propiore Dei. ———— *Æn.* 6.

Κυρὴ δ' ἐν θαλάμοιο δέσπασε· κρεττὶ μινεν  
ἡδύλι, ἐν θαλάμοισι. ἀφ' ἡνέξασα δ' ὄχλας,  
Ἐδραμὴν ————

Ταῖς κρεττικολαίᾳ βάλῃς ἐπὶ νυμφοτικῇ  
Πλαζομένη περδὴν ἱερὴν αἰσιμαίτο δαφνίη.  
Παύλῃ δὲ βρυχάτο κατὰ πύλιν. ————

Ὅτε ὅτε θρησκῶν εἰς δαμνοὺς γυναικῶν.  
Ναδυμὸς αὐλὸς ἐτυψεν ορεῖμασι· Διούσης,  
Ἥτις δὴ τὸ φθόρον παρρηγοῖ ὁμοῦ τιταίνει,  
Γυμνοὶ ἐπὶ σείσας κρητὶ κλυομένην κίονα.

Τὸς ἡγὺς πλεοφθόρος ἀνείκελται νοοῖς

Κατασπινδὴ νεφελῶν ἱμαίνετο· πυκνὴ δὲ κατὰ  
Κορυμβομένη καὶ τέρπον, ἀντικλῶ μιννοδὲ φωνῇ.

Destruction of *Troy*.

There is one Circumstance of Similitude between the Descriptions of *Tryphiodorus* and *Statius*, that makes me think one of them borrowed from the other; and that is the Likeness of the Comparison: For as the Phrenny of *Thiodamas* is compared to that of one of *Cybele's* Priests, so the Fury of *Cassandra* is illustrated by that of a *Thracian Bacchanal*. But who is the Original in this Case cannot be known, till the Time, in which *Tryphiodorus* flourished is ascertained, which *Mr Merri-k*, his Translator, assures us is not yet done.

474 STATIUS's THEBAID. Book X.

And foams and quakes, unable to controul  
 The lab'ring Impulse of his master'd Soul  
 His haggard Face with Heat unwonted glows, 235  
 And by quick Turns his Colour comes and goes:  
 He rolls his Eyes around; his Locks, that flow  
 Disorder'd, shake the Chaplet on his Brow.  
 At Periods thus the *Phrygian* Zealot raves,  
 Whom *Cybele* from his terrific Caves, 240  
 Or Shrines allures, nor tho' he bleeds, he knows  
 His Arms are hack'd and seam'd with frequent Blows:  
 He plies the holy Pine, and whirls around  
 His Hair: the Motion deadens ev'ry Wound,  
 The Field, and gory Tree are seiz'd with Fear, 245  
 And the scar'd Lions high her Chariot rear.  
 Now to the Council-Hall, and awful Dome  
 With Standards hung, the madding Seer had come:  
*Adrastus* here presides o'er the Debate,  
 And plans the Welfare of th' indanger'd State: 250  
 The Peers of *Argos* stand, and form a Ring  
 About the Throne of their consulting King,  
 Advanc'd by the late Deaths, nor do they thank  
 The cruel Stroke, that elevates their Rank.  
 As when a Vessel has her Pilot lost 255  
 In a mid-voyage, half the Ocean cross'd,  
 One, who with Skill the Prow or Side-Decks guides,  
 Succeeds, and at the widow'd Helm presides;  
 Th' astonish'd Ship then wonders as she goes,  
 With equal Speed, and equal Steerage knows. 260  
 Thus to the *Greeks* the sprightly Seer imparts  
 Fresh Spirits, and re-fortifies their Hearts:  
 Heav'n's Mandates, and Advice of high Import  
 To you, renowned Chieftains, we report.

BOOK X. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 475

Think not, these weighty Accents are my own; 265  
 A God inspires them, whose prophetic Crown,  
 Approv'd by your consenting Voice, I wear,  
 Nor in Despite of him, these Ensigns bear.  
 This Night, now big with many a daring Deed,  
 By Fate for glorious Treachery's decreed: 270  
 Lo! Honour calls, and Fortune asks your Hands  
 To act, and Hearts to dare, what she commands.  
 The *Thebans* sleep—Then let this Night repay  
 The deathful Feats, and Carnage of the Day.  
 To Arms, to Arms—this Hour shall make Amends  
 For all, and serve as Fun'rals to our Friends:  
 Burst we the Gates, shou'd they our Wrath oppose,  
 And turn the Tide of Vengeance on our Foes.  
 For by these Tripods, and th' untimely Fate  
 Of our late Augur, in the last Debate 280  
 This, warn'd by fav'ring Omens, I beheld,  
 What Time our Host, by hostile Force repell'd,  
 Forsook the Fight; but now the Pow'rs divine  
 Confirm, repeat, and clear the former Sign.  
 Beneath the Covert of the silent Night 285  
 The Seer himself stood manifest to Sight,

v. 269. *This Night, now big with many a*] This Machine is very beautiful; and indeed a Contrivance to repair the Acts of the last Day by this Night-Adventure was very necessary, as the *Greeks* were very much dispirited by the Death of the four Leaders. The Hint of it is taken from the 10th Book of the *Iliad*, where *Dipræde* and *Ulysses* sally out upon the like Errand; or from the 9th of the *Æneid*, where *Nisus* and *Euryalus* make an Expedition of this Kind, and give Rise to a noble Episode. And here I cannot but take Notice, how amiable *Adrastus* appears to us, who ever anxious for the Good of his People, keeps awake and calls a Council to settle the Means of their Preservation, in this Behaviour we may discover the Marks of an affectionate Father, a sincere Friend, a patriotic King, and a prudent General.

From Earth emerg'd; such as alive he shone,  
 The Colour of his Steeds was chang'd alone.  
 I speak no Visions of the Night profound,  
 Nor Prodigies in Slumber only found. 290  
 Dost thou (he cry'd) permit the *Greeks* to lose  
 This fair Occasion, sure they can't refuse?  
 Restore, degen'rate Chief, these Wreaths restore,  
 So ill-deserv'd, nor so disgrac'd before.  
 I taught thee not for this the Mysteries 295  
 Of Heav'n, or how to read each Wing, that flies.  
 But come at least—on *Thebes* revenge my Death,  
 And with thy Sword suppress their forfeit Breath.  
 He said, and urg'd me to the nightly War.  
 With his uplifted Spear, and all his Car. 300  
 Snatch then the Vengeance, which the Gods bestow;  
 No more, Man clos'd with Man, we seek the Foe:  
 Fencelss they lie; and we've full Pow'r to rage:  
 But who with me will in th' Emprize engage,  
 And, while the Fates permit, his Glory raise 305  
 On this firm Base, and win eternal Praise?  
 Mark yon repeated Omens of the Night,  
 Auspicious Birds! — I'll follow them to fight,  
 Tho' none shou'd second me: for lo! again  
 He drives his rattling Chariot o'er the Plain. 310

v. 308. *I'll follow them to fight*] This recalls to my Remembrance a similar Rant, which *Homer* puts into the Mouth of *Diamede*, tho' perhaps, with less propriety: as in him it was the Result of downright Rashness, but in our Augur, of an honest Confidence in the Deity.

Ἄλλοι μινύσας χαρπαλίως Ἀχαιοὶ  
 Εἶπεν περ Τροίην διακίρατον, αἱ δ' αὖτε  
 Φλογίσαν σὺν ἡμεῖσι φίλον ἱερὸν πατρίδα γαῖαν.  
 Νῦν δ' ἔγω, Ἰθάκης τε μεχρόμεθ' αἰσῶσι τέμνεσθαι  
 ἰλίεσσι θυρωμεν. σὺν γὰρ εἴμι εἰλιδόμεν. *Od. Iliad. B. 9. v. 45.*

Thus

Thus with exalted Voice the Chief exclaims  
 Piercing the Night's dull Ear, and all inflames,  
 As by one Pow'r inspir'd, with him they join,  
 Resolv'd to share, whate'er the Fates design.  
 Full thirty Warriors, at the King's Command, 315  
 He singles out, the Flow'r of all the Band:  
 But Envy swell'd each other *Argive's* Breast,  
 Eager of Action, Enemy to Rest;  
 Some deem their Race a Merit, and make known  
 Their Grandfire's Actions, others boast their own, 320  
 Or will, that Lots be cast.—This seen, the King  
 Exults, buoy'd up on Hope's aspiring Wing,  
 On *Pholoë* thus the Rearer of the Steed,  
 When the kind Spring renews his gen'rous Breed,  
 With Joy views these strain up the Mountain-Steep,  
 Those with their Dams contend, or dare the Deep:  
 Then much he muses, which are fit to train  
 For rural Labours, or th' embattled Plain,  
 Which best would serve the Chace, or soonest rise  
 To Palms *Eleon*, and th' Olympic Prize? 330  
 Such honest Glee the hoary Monarch shows,  
 Nor checks their Ardors, nor less eager glows.  
 What Gods (he cries) so sudden, yet so late  
 Thus interpose to save th' afflicted State?

v. 323. On *Pholoë* thus] *Homer* illustrates the Joy, which *Aeneas* displays on viewing the Discipline and Valour of his Troops by that of a Shepherd, on seeing his Flocks in good Plight, as he leads them to Water.

————— λὺτὰρ ἔπειτα

Ἄλλοι ἔπειθ', ἵσται τε μετακτιλὸν ἵσταιτο μῆλα  
 Πισμὲν' ἐν βοσκήῃς, ἤστανται δὲ καὶ τι φρένα ποιμένα.  
 Ὡς ἄνθρωποι θυμῶς. οἳ δὲ ἀνδρείως γαργάει,  
 Ὡς ἰδὲ λαὸν ἄνθρωπος ἐπισκομεῖται τοὶ αὐτῶν.

Are

Are these the Seeds of Courage, that withstood 335  
 Distress so long, the Ebb of gen'rous Blood?  
 Illustrious Youths, I praise you, and enjoy  
 Sedition, rais'd thro' Ardor to destroy:  
 But, as we meditate a fraudulent Blow,  
 Our Motions must be private, lest they know. 340  
 A noisy Crowd ill suits with dark Designs,  
 Restrain your Rage, till *Sol* returning shines,  
 Then we'll all sally out, to War releas'd.—  
 Sooth'd by these Words, their youthful Fury ceas'd.  
 As when stern *Æolus* rolls the huge Stone 345  
 Before his Cave, and from his airy Throne  
 Confines the Winds, all eager to engage,  
 And pour upon the Deeps their blust'ring Rage.  
 The Seer *Agyllus* to the Task assign'd.  
 And *Astor*.—This was skill'd to sway the Mind 350  
 With bland Persuasion; that, *Alcides'* Son,  
 Boasts equal Strength. and equal Trophies won.  
 Beneath each Chief ten Warriors take their Way;  
 Which might alone the *Theban* Host affray  
 In open Fight.—The Seer himself lays down 355  
 The Ensigns of his God, the Laurel-Crown,  
 And Fillet, that confines his flowing Hair,  
 Commended to the aged Monarch's Care:  
 In *Polynices'* Mail his Breast he cas'd,  
 And on his Head the proffer'd Helmet lac'd. 360  
 Stern *Capaneus* a Sword to *Astor* gave,  
 For he himself, immoderately brave,

v. 361. *Stern Capaneus a Sword to Astor*] That it was a Custom among the Ancients to make Presents of this Kind to Adventurers, before they set out on an Expedition, is evident from *Æneid's* Book the 10th, v. 255.

Disdains Heav'n's Guidance, and the Night's Alarms,  
 With *Nemius* then *Agyllus* changes Arms;  
 For little would avail the Archer now, 365  
 The Shafts *Herculean*, and unerring Bow.  
 Thus, sheath'd in radiant Arms, they quit their Tents,  
 And, headlong, from the steepy Battlements  
 Leap down, lest, shou'd they thro' the Portals take  
 Their Way, the brazen Hinge the *Thebans* wake. 370  
 Stretch'd on the Ground, they view the ready Prey:  
 As slain already, motionless they lay.  
 Wheree'er you list, my brave Companions, go,  
 And hew a Passage thro' the sleeping Foe,  
 (With Voice distinct, the Priest exhorting cry'd) 375  
 Nor spare the Blessing, which the Gods provide.  
 You see the Foe expos'd upon the Plain:  
 Did these? I speak with Anger and Disdain)  
 Did these coop up our Warriors in their Wall,  
 Blind to their Int'rest, deaf to Glory's Call? 380

Τοῦδ' αὖτις μὲ δῶκε ρομφαίῳ λίμῃ Θρησυμίδης  
 Φάσγανον ἄμφω [τὸ τ' ἰὸν παρὰ ἑνὶ λίαντι]  
 Καὶ σάκος· ἀμφὶ δὲ οἱ κενὴν πεφάληφον ἔηκε  
 ταυράϊον, ἀφαλόσι, καὶ ἄλοφον, ἥτις ἀπταῖντος  
 Κίκληται. Ρύσται ὃ κερὶ θυλιῶν αἰζῶν.  
 Μηδ' αὖτις δ' Ὀδυσσεὺς ἔδωκε βίον, ἡδὲ φασγάνον,  
 Καὶ ζῆλον. ἀμφὶ δὲ οἱ κενὴν πεφάληφον ἔηκε  
 Ρομφαίῳ.

And from *Virgil's* *Æneid*, Book the 9th, Line 303.

Sic air illacrymans: humero simul exuit ense  
 Auratum, mira quem fecerat arte Lycaon  
 Gnoſſius atque habilem vaginâ aptarat eburnâ.  
 Dat Niſo Mneſtheus pellem, horrentisque Leonis  
 Exuvias: galeam ſidus permutat Alethes.

The holy Scriptures likewise make mention of a ſimilar Gift: *Samuel*, Book 1st, Chap. 18. ver. 4. "And *Jonathan* ſtrip't himſelf of the Robe, that was upon him, and gave it to *David*, and his Garments even to his Sword, and to his Bow, and to his Girdle.

This said, in Wrath he drew his glitt'ring Brand,  
 And pass'd the dying Troops with rapid Hand.  
 Who can recount the Slaughter? who can name  
 The Groupe of vulgar Deaths, unknown to Fame?  
 His Rage no Rule, his Sword no Limits knows; 385  
 But bathes his Steps in Purple, as he goes:  
 Limbs, Trunks and sever'd Heads he leaves behind,  
 And hears their Groans remurmur'd in the Wind.  
 Stretch'd on a Couch one doz'd, one press'd the Field,  
 Another, stumbling, overlay'd his Shield: 390  
 Here Goblets lie, there Weapons strew'd between,  
 Of War, and foul Debauch, a motley Scene.  
 Some on their massy Bucklers stood reclin'd,  
 Like lifeless Statues; just as they're confin'd  
 By *Morpheus* in the Bands of soft Repose, 395  
 So various were the Postures of the Foes.  
 Here, clad in Arms, *Saturnia* takes her Stand,  
 A Torch held forth to guide her favour'd Band;  
 She points the Bodies out, with Fury warms  
 Their gen'rous Breasts, and strings their nervous Arms.  
*Tbiodamas* perceiv'd her, but suppress'd 401  
 The silent Joy beneath his conscious Breast.  
 Dull'd with Success, his Wrath is at a Stand;  
 Blunt grows the Falchion, weary is his Hand.  
 As when the Native of the *Caspian* Wood 403  
 (Some Tiger fierce) has gorg'd his Maw with Food,  
 His beauteous Spots confus'd with clotted Gore,  
 He views the Prey, and grieves his Hunger's o'er.  
 The weary Prophet thus surveys the Slain,  
 And mourns his vanquish'd Arm, but mourns in vain:  
 He wishes now a fresh Increase of Might, 411  
 A hundred Arms, and hundred Hands to fight,



Then tir'd of Menaces, and wordy Rage,  
 He hopes the rising *Thebans* may engage.  
 At Distance *Astor*, and the Chief, who trac'd 415  
 His Lineage from *Alcmena's* Son, lay waste  
 The *Tyrian* Forces.—Each a Crowd succeeds,  
 And trails a bloody Path along the Meads.  
 The matted Grass stands high in sable Blood,  
 And from the Tents descends a reeking Flood. 420  
 The Breath of Sleep and Death thick steams around,  
 And with the recent Slaughter smoaks the Ground.  
 Supinely as at first, each *Theban* lies,  
 Nor lifts his Head, nor opes his heavy Eyes.  
 With such wide-hov'ring Wings the God invades 425  
 The wretched Crew, and spreads o'er all his Shades.  
*Ialmenus*, unknowing Rest, had strung  
 His Harp to *Phæbus*, and in Concert sung  
 A lofty *Pæan* in the *Tyrian* Strain,  
 Doom'd never to behold him rise again : 430  
 His Neck, with Sleep's incumbent Weight depress'd,  
 Swerv'd to the left, and sunk upon his Breast ;  
 This seen, *Agylleus* drove his piercing Brand  
 Sheer thro' his Breast, and struck his better Hand ;  
 Whose taper Fingers trembled on the Strings, 435  
 Forc'd by the Stroke the vital Spirit wings  
 Its Way to Hell.—The Tables down he spurns,  
 And backward in the Bowls the Wine returns ;  
 The wid'ning Wound emits a copious Flood  
 Of *Bacchus'* heady Juice, and mingled Blood. 440  
 At *Thamyrus* the furious *Astor* flies,  
 As in his Brother's Arms entwin'd he lies ;  
 Pierc'd in the Back *Etheclus* *Tagus* flew :  
 From off his Neck the Head of *Hebrus* flew.

By *Danaus*' Stroke : unconscious of his Death, 445  
 Without one Pang or Groan he yields his Breath.  
 Young *Palpetus* beneath the Chariot press'd  
 The clay-cold Earth, and puffing from his Breast  
 The nauseous Fumes, his Coursers terrified,  
 That crop'd the flow'ry Herbage at his Side. 450  
 From his gorg'd Mouth the filthy Liquor flows,  
 And in his Veins, intoxicating, glows :  
 When lo! th' *Inacbian* Prophet, as he snor'd,  
 Deep in his Throat infix'd the shining Sword :  
 Wine from his Wound came issuing as he died, 455  
 And drown'd th' imperfect Murmur in the Tide.  
 A deathful Vision haply then was sent  
 In which he saw pourtray'd the dire Event ;  
*Tbiodamus* his Breast unguarded tore :  
 So dream'd the luckless Chief, and wak'd no more. 460  
 The Clouds dissolve in Dew upon the Plains,  
 And of Night's Reign a Fourth alone remains :  
*Bootes* flies before the greater Car  
 Of *Sol*, and dim grows each inferior Star.  
 And, Matter failing, Slaughter found an End, 465  
 When prudent *Astor* thus accosts his Friend.

v. 457. *A deathful Vision*] This Image is very natural, and imitated from the tenth Book of the *Iliad*, ver. 496.

——— *Καὶ δὲ ἴναρ κεφαλῶν ἰσίων*  
*Τὴν βούτ', Οἰβάδαο χάϊς, ἄλγ' μῦθον Ἀθήνας.*

*Shakespeare's Tragedy of Macbeth* presents us with as fine a Picture, where two of *Duncan's* Soldiers, just as their King was assassinated, are described starting out of their Sleep in the greatest Perturbation.

There's one did laugh in his Sleep, and one cry'd Murder,  
 They wak'd each other, and I stood and hear'd them ;  
 One cry'd God bless us, and Amen the other,  
 As they had seen me with these Hangman's Hands.

*Tbiodamus,*

*Thiodamas*, let this unhop'd for Joy  
 Find its due Bounds: here cease we to destroy.  
 Scarce one, I ween, of all this num'rous Train  
 Survives to war, and visit *Thebes* again; 470  
 Unless the deep'ning Streams of Blood conceal  
 Th' inglorious Coward from the vengeful Steel.  
 Then moderate thy yet successful Rage:  
 There want not Gods, who will for *Thebes* engage,  
 And even those who aided us before, 475  
 May fly, and give the longsome Labour o'er.  
 The Seer obeys, and lifting to the Skies  
 His Hands, embu'd in recent Slaughter cries:  
*Phabus*, the well-earn'd Trophies of the Night,  
 And First-fruits of the War, thy lawful Right, 480  
 Accept from me, thy Soldier and thy Priest,  
 Tho' foul and reeking from the bloody Feast,  
 If, patient of thee, right thy Gifts I use,  
 Thy Spirit often in my Breast infuse.  
 These Arms, and bloody Honours now suffice: 485  
 But, when our Country glads again our Eyes,  
 So many Gifts shall answer thy Demand,  
 And Oxen bleed beneath the Pontiff's Hand.  
 This said, his pious Pray'r the Chieftain ends.  
 And from the Fray recalls his pious Friends. 490  
 From *Calydon* and *Mænalus* there came  
 Two mighty Warriors not unknown to Fame,  
*Hoplens* and *Dymas*, by their Kings approv'd,  
 Their Faith rewarded, and their presence lov'd:  
 Their Leaders lost, they loath the Light of Life. 495  
 Th' *Actolian* first promotes the glorious Strife.  
 Say, dearest *Dymas*, does no Care remain,  
 No small Compassion for thy Sov'reign slain,

Whose Corse perhaps the famish'd Fowls of Air,  
Or *Theban* Dogs with Rage relentless tear? 500

What then is left to grace his Country's Urn?

See, his fierce Mother waits for your Return!

But still the Ghost of *Tydeus*, void of Rest,

Stalks in my View, and rages in my Breast.

Tho' less expos'd to *Phæbus* he appears, 505

His Limbs well-harden'd, and confirm'd with Years.

Yet in the Search I'll range the Champaign o'er,

And force my Way to *Thebes*. — He said no more,

For *Dymas* cut him short, and thus reply'd. —

By the Chief's wandring Shade, my greatest Guide. 510

And yon bright Stars, that gild the Skies, I swear,

That this same Heat and Energy I share.

Long have I sought a Partner in the Deed;

Now, back'd by thy Assistance, I'll precede.

This said, he leads the Way, and to the Skies 515

Lifting his Hands, in Height of Anguish cries.

O *Cynthia*, Queen of the mysterious Night,

If truly Fame reports it thy Delight

To wear a triple Form, and often change

Thy Virgin-Aspect in the sylvan Range, 520

Look down from Heav'n, and to these Eyes restore

Thy Comrade's Corse (thy Comrade now no more:)

He, fairest far of all th' *Arcadian* Boys,

Excites our Vengeance, and our Search employs.

The Goddess heard, and bright'ning ev'ry Ray, 525

Points her sharp Horn to where the body lay:

Then *Thebes* shines forth, *Cithæron's* Hills arise

In Prospect fair, and steal into the Skies.

Thus when at Depth of Night avenging Jove

Rolls his hoarse Thunders thro' the Realms above, 530

The Clouds divide, the Stars serenely glow,  
 And sudden Splendors gild the World below.  
 Brave *Hoplens* catch'd the Rays, whose piercing Light,  
 Presents the Corse of *Tydeus* to his Sight.  
 Both Bodies found, they raise a gladsome cry, 535  
 (The Sign agreed) and to the Weight apply  
 Their Shoulders; pleas'd, as if preserv'd from Death,  
 Each Corse was re-inspir'd with vital Breath.  
 Nor durst they give full Vent to Tears or Words;  
 Th' unfriendly Dawn no Leisure-time affords. 540  
 With Grief the paler Darkness they survey,  
 As thro' the silent Shades they bend their Way.  
 To pious Heroes Fate Success denies,  
 And Fortune rarely crowns the bold Emprize.  
 The Burden now grows lighter in their Hand, 545  
 As the whole Camp in Prospect they command,  
 When from behind black Clouds of Dust arise,  
 And sudden Sounds run echoing thro' the Skies.  
*Amphion*, eager at the King's Command,  
 Conducts a Troop of Horse, to scour the Land, 550

v. 549. *Amphion, eager at the King's Command*] The Manner of the Discovery is similar to that of the Adventurers in the Ninth Book of the *Æneid*, and the Question put to them by the Enemy much the same.

Interea præmissi equites ex urbe Latina,  
 Cætera dum legio campis instructa moratur,  
 Ibant, et Turno regi responsa ferebant,  
 Tercentum, scutati omnes, Volscente magistro.  
 Jamque propinquabant castris, murosque subibant,  
 Cum procul hos lævo spectantes limite cernunt:  
 Et galea Euryalum sublustri noctis in umbra  
 Prodidit immemorem, radiisque adversa refulsit.  
 Haud temere est visum. Conclamat ab Agmine Volscens,  
 State, viri: quæ causa viæ? quive estis in armis?  
 Quove tenetis iter? — Verse 367.

And watch the Foe.—While far before his Train,  
 He spurs his Courser thro' the trackless Plain,  
 He catch'd a transient Glance (for yet the light  
 Had but in Part dispell'd the Shades of Night)  
 Of some faint Object, that at Distance strays, 555  
 He looks again, and doubts if he surveys.  
 The Fraud detected.—Stand, whoc'er you are,  
 (*Amphion* cries) and whence you come, declare.  
 Confess'd at length, the wretched Pair appear,  
 The wretched Pair rush on with Speed, and fear 560  
 Not for themselves.—He shakes his Javelin now,  
 And seems to meditate a deathful Blow;  
 Yet high in Air the missile Weapon cast,  
 Which wilful err'd, the Object far o'erpast :  
 Before the Face of *Dymas* fix'd it lay, 565  
 (Who started first) and check'd him in the Way.  
 But valiant *Ægyptus* his Javelin toss'd  
 With Care, nor will'd the fair Occasion lost.  
 Through *Hopleus*' Back the well-aim'd Dart he flung,  
 And graz'd the Corse, that on his Shoulders hung.  
 He falls, not mindless of his Lord in Death, 571  
 But in the painful Grasp expires his Breath :  
 Too happy, had he reach'd the *Stygian* Coast  
 Just then, unknowing, that the Corse was lost.  
 This scap'd not *Dymas* : as he turn'd behind, 575  
 He sees the Troops, in his Destruction join'd,

v. 561. *He shakes his Javelin now*] This Circumstance is borrowed from the tenth Book of *Homer's Iliad*, v. 372.

Ἦγε, καὶ ἔγχος ἀφῆκεν, ἰκὼν δ' ἠμάρταν φανός.  
 Διέστρεψεν δ' ὑπὲρ ἄμμου βύζιον θυρὸς ἀκαστή  
 Ἐν γαῖῃ ἱππύγη. ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἴσεν, πύρρονος τε.

Uncertain or to tempt th' approaching Foes  
 With soothing Blandishments, or ply with Blows.  
 Wrath spurs to Combate, Fortune bids him try  
 The Force of Pray'r: on none he can rely. 580  
 Too wroth to sue, before his Feet he plac'd  
 The wretched Corse, with Wounds unfelt disgrac'd;  
 And tossing to the left a weighty Hide,  
 (Which grac'd his Back, and hung with martial Pride,  
 A Tiger's Spoils) protends his naked Blade, 585  
 And guards the Hero's Body, undismay'd:  
 Prepar'd for ev'ry Dart, that comes, he turns:  
 And with the Thirst of Death or Conquest burns.  
 As the gaunt Lioness, whose cruel Den  
 Is thick beset with clam'rous Hounds and Men, 590

v. 581. *Too wroth to sue, before his Feet he plac'd*] Nothing can exceed the Valour and Magnanimity of this Hero.—He would not surrender up the Body of his Friend, and knew that it was impossible to preserve it by carrying it on his Back, as it must necessarily tie up his Hands from making any Defence: He therefore places it on the Ground before his Enemies, as the Prize for which they were to fight.—His various Movements and Situation on this Occasion are well illustrated by the subsequent Comparison, which is imitated from *Homer*.

Ὡς τις πὶ λίων περὶ εἴσι τέκνοντι  
 ὅτι ῥά τ' αὖτις ἄρνει συνασπήςσινται ἐν ὕλῃ  
 Ἄνδρες ἠπακτῆρες, ὃ δὲ πὶ θένει βλεμταίνει,  
 Πᾶν δ' ἑ' ἐπισκυλίῃσιν ἄλκῃ, ὅσσι καλύπτων. II. B. 17. 133.

*Ariosto* in his *Orlando Furioso* has translated our Author's Comparison almost literally, with the single Difference of substituting a She Bear instead of a Lioness.

Com' Orsa, che l' alpestre cacciatore  
 Nella pietrosa tana assalito abbia:  
 Sta sopra i figli con incerto core,  
 E freme in suoni di pietà, e di rabbia.  
 Ira la invita, e natural furore  
 A spiegar l'ugna, e insanguiner la sabbia;  
 Amor la intenerisce, e la ritira  
 A riguardar i figli in mezzo all' ira.

Stands o'er her Whelps, erect, and sends around,  
 Perplext with Doubts, a mournful, angry Sound,  
 With Ease she might disperse the sable Train,  
 And knap the Weapons with her Teeth in twain,  
 But nat'ral Love o'ercomes the Lust of Fight : 595  
 She foams with Rage, yet keeps her Whelps in Sight.  
 The Falchion now lops off his weaker Hand,  
 Tho' great *Ambion* check'd the furious Band,  
 And by his Hair the Youth is drag'd along,  
 By Fate resign'd to an insulting Throng. 600  
 Then, nor till then, in suppliant Guise he bow'd  
 His Sword, and thus address'd the ruthless crowd.  
 More gently treat the tender Boy, I pray,  
 By that blest Cradle, where young *Bacchus* lay,  
 By luckless *Ino's* Flight, and female Fears, 605  
 And your *Palamon's* almost equal Years.  
 If one among you tastes domestic Joys,  
 If any here paternal Care employs,  
 Heap o'er his poor Remains a little Sand,  
 And to his Pyre apply one kindled Brand. 610

v. 609. *Heap o'er his poor Remains*] So *Horace*, Lib. 1. Ode 28.

At tu, nauta, vagæ ne parce malignas arenæ  
 Ossibus. et capiti inhumato  
 Particulam dare.

It was sufficient for all the Rites of Burial, that Dust should be thrice thrown on an unburied Body. This Kind of Sepulture is by *Quintilian* called *Collatitia sepultura*. It was an Act of Religion so indispensable, that no Person could be excused, and even the Pontifices, who were forbidden to approach or look on a dead Body, were obliged to perform this Duty, as *Servius* tells us in his Notes on the 6th Book of *Virgil's Æneid*. Thus, among the *Jews*, the High Priest was forbidden to approach his Father or Mother's and yet he was enjoined to inter any dead Body, which he found in the Road. — *Francis's Horace*.



His Looks, behold! his Looks this Boon implore,  
 First let the Monsters lap my spatter'd Gore:  
 Me, me resign to the fell Birds of Prey;  
 'Twas I, who train'd, and forc'd him to the Fray.  
 If such is thy Desire (*Amphion* cries) 615  
 To deck his Corse with fun'ral Obsequies,  
 What, to redeem their Loss, the *Greeks* prepare,  
 Their Schemes, their Counsels, and Resolves declare.  
 As a Reward, the Light of Life enjoy,  
 And, as thou wilt, intomb th' unhappy Boy. 620  
 Th' *Arcadian*, full of Horror, scorn'd a Part  
 So base, plung'd all the Poniard in his Heart,  
 And cry'd.—Did nought, save this, remain to close  
 My Country's Fate, that I shou'd tell her Foes  
 Her fix'd Intents? — we buy no fun'ral Pyre 625  
 On Terms like these, nor wou'd the Prince require.  
 He spake, and on his youthful Leader laid  
 His Breast, wide-open'd by the trenchant Blade,  
 And said in dying Accents.—Thou shalt have  
 My lifeless Corse, a temporary Grave. 630  
 Thus did the Warrior of *Ætolian* Race,  
 And brave *Arcadian*, in the wish'd Embrace  
 Of their lov'd Kings, expire their vital Breath,  
 Rush on Destruction, and enjoy their Death.  
 Embalm'd in Verse, illustrious Shades, you live, 635  
 And share alike the Praise my Muse can give,  
 Tho', rank'd at Distance in th' *Aonian* Quire,  
 She boasts not loftier *Maro's* tuneful Lyre:  
 Perchance too *Nisus*, and his Friend may deign  
 To stile you Comrades in th' *Elysian* Plain. 640

v. 639. *Perchance too Nisus and his Friend*] This is a very model  
 Character of one of the most beautiful Episodes I know. Neither  
 can

But fierce *Amphion* to the regal Court  
 A Herald sends, commission'd to report  
 His Feats of Triumph, the Device explain,  
 And render back each captive Corse again.  
 He flies himself to brave the leaguer'd Foes, 645  
 And each Associate's sever'd Visage shows.  
 Meantime the *Grecians* from the Walls discern  
*Thiodamas*, and hail his safe return;  
 Nor cou'd they check the Gush of Joy, and hide  
 The Smiles of secret Transport, when they spy'd 650  
 The naked Swords, distain'd with Blood.—Again  
 A louder Clamor runs thro' all the Train,  
 Whilst, leaning o'er the Ramparts, they look down  
 For the returning Troops, each for his own.  
 Thus when a callow Brood of Birds descry 655  
 Their Dam long-absent, as she cleaves the Sky,  
 They long to meet her, and put forth their Heads  
 Far from the Nest, whilst anxiously she dreads  
 Left, ere she reach the Tree, they fall,—then clings  
 To the warm Nest, and flaps her loving Wings. 660

can I think it so much inferior to that of *Nisus* and *Eurpalus*, as the Author seems to do himself. In *Virgil* we admire Friendship for the Living, but in *Statius* a generous Gratitude to the Dead; which, however, is given up to the Service of the Public. The Reply, which *Dymas* makes to *Amphion*, who tempted him to betray his Countrymen, with the Promise of Life and the Body of his Friend, is equal to any thing I have ever read in the sentimental Way.

v. 655. *Thus when a callow Brood*] There is an agreeable Simplicity in this Comparison, which may disgust many, who do not observe, that the Poet, accommodating himself to the Occasion, means only to describe the Impatience of the *Thebans* to see their Friends, who had accompanied the Expedition, and the Manner and Attitude, in which they posted themselves for Observation. He must have a very deprav'd Taste for Poetry, who would have this Image suppressed.

But, whilst they clasp their Friends in their Embrace,  
 And count the Slaughter of the *Theban* Race,  
 For absent *Hoplens* some Concern they show,  
 And oft complain, that *Dymas* is too slow.  
 Behold! the Leader of the *Tyrian* Band, 665  
*Amphion* comes, a Falchion in his Hand.  
 Damp'd was his Joy for the two Warriors slain,  
 When he beheld, what Carnage heap'd the Plain,  
 The Strength, and Bulwark of the *Thebans* lost,  
 And in one Ruin stretch'd a mighty Host. 670  
 His vital Frame a sudden Tremour shook,  
 Such as attends the Wretch, by Thunder struck :  
 Fix'd as a Stone, and motionless he stood,  
 And lost at once his Voice, his Sight, and Blood.  
 The Courser turns him, ere he bursts in Sighs: 675  
 The Dust rolls backward, as the Cohort flies.  
 With lengthen'd Strides the *Tyrians* fought the Gate,  
 When the brave *Grecians*, hearten'd and elate  
 With their nocturnal Triumph, to the Meads  
 Spring, full of Hopes, and urge their foaming Steeds  
 O'er Arms, and Blood and Bodies of the Slain, 680  
 Excite the Dust, and thunder thro' the Plain,  
 Their heavy Hoofs the Limbs of Heroes tore,  
 And the stain'd Axle-trees are clog'd with Gore.

v. 677. *With lengthen'd Strides*] *Homer* paints *Heſſor's* Progress in the Eleventh Book of the *Iliad*, with the ſame Heat of Imagination.

Ὡς ἄρ' αὖθις φωνήσας, ἵμεσιν κακῆς τριχῆς ἵππας  
 μάστιγι λυγρῇ· τοὶ δὲ, πληγῆς αἰσίνης,  
 ἱμῶς ἔφερον θοοὶ ἄρ' αὖθις μετὰ τοῦσδε καὶ Ἀχαιοὺς,  
 στήθεσσι νίκης τε καὶ ἀσπίδος· αἶματι δ' ἄζων  
 Νέεθι ἄπας πεπάλακτο, καὶ ἄντυγες αἰεὶ περὶ δῖον,  
 ὥς ἄρ' ἄφ' ἱππῶν οὐ πλῆνι μαθ' αὖθις ἵστασθαι,  
 αἰετ' ἀπ' ἐπιστάτῳ.

Sweet is the Vengeance, pleasant is the Way, 685  
 As if all *Thebes* in Dust, low-humbled lay,  
 And trampled with their Feet.—To these began  
 Great *Capaneus*.—No longer on the Plan  
 Of timid Caution, urge we the dark Fight,  
 But let our Deeds be witness'd by the Light. 690  
 By me no other Omens are explor'd,  
 Than my victorious Hand, and naked Sword.  
 He said; *Adrastus* and his Son inspire  
 The Troops with Courage, and add Fire to Fire :  
 The Augur then more sad and slow succeeds. 695  
 And now that Day had clos'd their martial Deeds,  
 The City enter'd; (while the wordy Chief  
 Recounts their Loss, and tells the Tale of Grief)  
 But *Megareus* the black Battalion ey'd  
 Rising on Sight, and from the Watch-Tow'r cry'd. 700  
 Shut, Sentry, shut the Gates, the Foe is near.—  
 There is a Season, when Excess of Fear  
 Augments our Vigour.—At the Word they rose,  
 And all the Gates, save one, were seen to close :  
 For whilst slow *Ecbion* at th' *Ogygian* toils, 705  
 The *Spartan* Youth, inflam'd with Lust of Spoils,  
 Rush boldly in, and in the Threshold fall,  
 Their Blood thick dash'd against the hostile Wall :

v. 688. *No longer on the Plan*] With what a beautiful Abruptness  
 does *Capaneus* break in upon us, and what a pleasingly-terrible  
 Effect has his Speech upon our Minds! Some may admire the de-  
 liberate Valour of *Aeneas*; but give me the Impetuosity of *Achilles*  
 and *Capaneus*: The former indeed is of the greatest Service to the  
 State, but the latter makes the finest Figure in Poesy. There is an  
 Eclat of Sentiment in this blunt and soldier-like Speech, that  
 forces and commands our Attention: Every Word is animated  
 with an enthusiastic Courage, and worthy to be delivered by a gal-  
 lant Officer.

Brave *Panopeus* from high *Taygetus* came,  
 To rough *Eurotas* *Oebalus* laid claim: 710  
 And thou, *Alcidamas*, whom Fame reports  
 A recent Victor in *Nemean* Sports,  
 Whose Wrists first *Tyndar's* Son with Gauntlets bound,  
 And with the season'd Cincture girt thee round,  
 With dying Eyes behold'st thy Patron's Star, 715  
 That sets, and gives thee to the Rage of War.  
 Th' *Oebalian* Grove, the Margin of the Stream,  
 From fair *Lacæus* stil'd, the Poet's Theme,  
 And Haunt of the false Swan, thy Death shall mourn,  
 And *Dian's* Nymphs the doleful Notes return. 720  
 Thy Mother too, who martial Precepts gave,  
 And whose sage Lessons form'd thee wise and brave,  
 Shall think, thou learn'd'st too much.—Thus in the Gate  
*Mars* rages on, and acts the Will of Fate.  
 At length, their Shoulders to the Mass oppos'd, 725  
 Great *Alimenides*, and *Acron* clos'd  
 The Valves of Iron—kept the Foes at Bay,  
 Barr'd the strong Portals, and exclude the Fray.  
 Thus two stout Bullocks, groaning as they bow  
 Their Necks, thro' Fields long-fallow from the Plough:

v. 729. *Thus two stout Bullocks*] The Image here given of the two Warriors is as lively as it is exact. Their Toil, Vigour, Nearness to each other, and the Difficulties they encounter with, perfectly answer to each Circumstance in the Comparison, which is abridg'd from *Homer's Iliad*.

Ἄλ' ὅς αἱ τοῦ βῆτι οἶοντι πηλὸν ἄροτρον,  
 Ἴσσι θυμὸν ἔχουσιν, σιταίνουσιν, ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρουρον  
 Προμυῖσιν παρῆσσι πάλος ἀνακαταίει ἰδρώς.  
 Τὸ μὲν τι ζυγὸν εἰς ἐὺζον ἀμφὶς ἵεργαι,  
 Ἰαμῖνον κατὰ δόλχε' ἵκνται δὲ τι πῖλόν αἰερέης.

Book 13. Line 703.

Their

Their Loss alafs! was equal to their Gain: 731

For they exclude their Friends, while they retain

Their Enemies, coop'd up within the Walls.

First *Ormenus* of *Groecian* Lineage falls:

In suppliant Posture whilst *Amyntor* stood, 735

And with extended Hands for Mercy su'd,

His parted Visage fell upon the Ground,

Th' unfinish'd Accents ceas'd beneath the Wound,

And his gay Chain, the Work of artful Hands,

Clinks, Dust-dishonour'd on the hostile Sands. 740

Meantime the Trench is broke, the Out-works fall,

And leave a Passage open to the Wall,

Near which in Lines was rang'd the num'rous Band

Of Infantry.—The Coursers trembling stand,

Nor, though impatient, dare the Trench o'erleap, 745

The Prospect was so dark, the Gulph so deep.

Just on the Margin eagerly they neigh,

Then suddenly start back with wild Affray.

These strive to force the Gates, those pluck away

The Pales, that in the Ground deep-fasten'd lay; 750

The Iron-Bars some labour to remove,

Whilst others from their sounding Places shove

Huge Stones.—Part see with Joy the Brands, they flung,

Struck to the Spires, or on the Turrets hung;

Part search the Basis, and apply the Pow'r

Of the dark Shell, to sap each hollow Tow'r. 755

v. 744. *The Coursers trembling stand*] These Lines are imitated from the Twelfth Book of the *Iliad*, Line 50.

—Τάφρον ἐπορεύοντες ἀλγιστάμενοι ἐδὲ οἱ ἵπποι  
τάλμασι ἀνέποδες. μέγα δ' ἤρριμίζον ἐπ' ἄλλων  
κάλαι ἰφίκαυτες. ἀπὸ γαίης διδίσκοντο πέφρη-  
εὐρεῖ, ἅτ' ἀρ' ὑπερβαίνειν χεῖρ', ἅπ' ἐνέουσαν  
ῥηιδίη. —

But the Besieg'd (for this Resource alone  
 Remain'd) the Summit of the Bulwarks crown;  
 And Stakes, well-season'd in the Flames, vast Beams,  
 Well-polish'd Darts, that shed incessant Gleams, 760  
 And heated Bullets from the Ramparts throw,  
 And rob the Walls of Stones, to gaul the Foe.  
 The weapon'd Windows hissing Javelins pour,  
 And thick around descends the steely Show'r.  
 As when on *Malea*, or *Ceraunia's* Hill 765  
 The Cloud-wrapt Tempests, motionless and still,  
 Collect new Forces, and augment their Rage,  
 Then sudden Combate with old Ocean wage.  
 Thus the beleag'ring *Greeks* without the Wall  
 Of *Thebes*, o'erpowr'd with hostile Numbers fall. 770  
 Their Breasts and Faces obvious to the Fray,  
 The thickning Tempest drives them not away:  
 Mindless of Death, strait to the Walls they turn  
 Their Looks, and their own Darts alone discern.  
 His Scythe-hung Car round *Thebes* while *Antheus*  
 drove,

A *Tyrian* Lance arrests him from above: 776  
 Numb'd with the Stroke, his Hand dismiss'd the  
 Rein;

He tumbles backward, fasten'd to the Wain  
 By his bright Greaves.—O wond'rous Fate of War!  
 His Arms are trail'd by the swift-rolling Car. 780  
 Beneath the smoaking Wheels two Ruts appear,  
 The third imprinted by the hanging Spear:  
 His graceful Head depending on the Strand,  
 His bloody Tresses purple all the Sand.

Meantime the Trumpet kindles fierce Alarms 785  
 Thro' the sad City, and excites to Arms,  
 Thund'ring at ev'ry Door it's baleful Call.  
 Their Posts assign'd by Lot, before them all  
 The Standaard-Bearer carries in his Hand  
 Th' imperial Ensign of the *Tyrian* Band. 790  
 Dire was the Face of Things with such a Scene  
 Not *Mars* himself would have delighted been.  
 Flight, circumfus'd in Gloom, nor rul'd by Thought,  
 Fear, Sorrow, and Despair, to Fury wrought,  
 The madding Town with doubtful Horrors rend, 795  
 And in one Subject various Passions blend.  
 You'd swear, the War was there.—The Tow'rs resound  
 With frequent Steps; the Streets are fill'd around:  
 With Fancy's Eye they view the Fire and Sword,  
 And wear the Fetters of an Argive Lord. 800  
 Preventing Fear absorb'd the Time to come:  
 They fill with Shrieks each House, and holy Dome;  
 Th' ungrateful Altars are besieg'd with Tears,  
 And the same Terror rules all Ranks and Years.

v. 785. *Mean Time the Trumpet*] After this melancholy Description of the Fate of *Anteus*, how are we startled at the sudden Sound of the Clarion! There is an equally abrupt Transition from the Pathetic to the Terrible, in the Ninth Book of *Virgil's Æneid*, where our Concern for the distress'd Mother of *Euryalus* is interrupted by

At tuba terribilem sonitum procul ære canoro  
 Increpuit.

The



The old Men pray for Death: the Youth by Turns  
Grows pale with Fright, or with Resentment burns:  
The trembling Courts the female Shrieks rebound,  
Their Infant-Sons, astonish'd at the Sound,  
Nor knowing, whence the Streams of Sorrow flow,  
Condole, and melt in sympathetic Woe. 810  
Love calls the Dames together.—At this Hour  
The Sense of Shame gives Place to Fortune's Pow'r.  
They arm the Men, with Courage fire each Breast;  
Schemes of Revenge with ready Wit suggest,  
And, rushing with them, lay before their Eyes 815  
Their Homes, and Babes, the Pledge of nuptial Ties.  
Thus when some Shepherd-Swain essays to drive  
The Bees thick cluster'd from their cavern'd Hive,  
In fable Clouds they rise, assert their Right,  
And, buzzing, urge each other to the Fight:

v. 805. *The old Men*] The Description of the different Effects this Consternation had upon the different Stages of Life, is executed with an amazing Spirit and Propriety; every Circumstance is Nature, and Nature without Disguise.

v. 817. *Thus when*] This Simile seems to have been taken from one in the Twelfth Book of the *Æneid*, which, according to Mons. Catrou, is imitated from *Apollonius Rhodius*, *Argonautics*, Lib. 1. Verse 130.

Ὡς δὲ μέλισσας σμήνη μίχα μελοδοτῆρας  
Ἢ μέλισσάκατοι πίττη ἐνὶ κρηταίῳσι,  
Αἱ δὲ τοι τῆς μὲν πόλεις ἢ ἐνὶ σίμῳ  
Βομβοῶν κλονιόνται, ἐπὶ πρὸ δὲ λιγυτέρῳ  
Καπνῷ τέφομεναι σίτρης ἱκὺς αἴσασιν.

*Virgil's* is.

Inclusas ut cum latebroso in Pumice Pastor  
Vestigavit apes, fumoque implevit amaro;  
Illæ intus trepidæ rerum per cerea castra  
Discurrunt, magnisque acuunt stridoribus iras.  
Volvitur ater odor testis; tum murmure cæco  
Intus saxa sonant: vacuas it fumus ad auras.

At length, deserted by their blunted Stings,  
 They clasp the honey'd Sweets with weary Wings,  
 And, pressing to them, take a last Farewell  
 Of their long-labour'd Combs, and captive Cell.  
 The Vulgar too each other's Schemes oppose 825  
 Kindled by them, the Flame of Discord glows.  
 With open Voice these wish the Crown restor'd.  
 And claim great *Polynices* for their Lord.  
 All Rev'rence lost.—No longer let him roam  
 (One cries) remote from his paternal Home, 830  
 But hail his Household-Gods, his Sire again,  
 And take Possession of his annual Reign.  
 Say, why shou'd I with frequent Blood atone  
 For the King's Crimes, and Perj'ry not my own?  
 Late, much too late (another Chief replies) 835  
 Comes that Advice, when the wrong'd Foe relies  
 On speedy Conquest.—A more Abject Crew  
 With Pray'rs and Tears to sage *Tiresias* sue,  
 And, as some Solace, urge him to disclose  
 The future Times, or fraught with Bliss or Woes. 840  
 But he the mighty Secret still suppress'd  
 Within the dark Recesses of his Breast,  
 And thus.—Why did your King my Counsel slight,  
 When I forbade him the perfidious Fight?  
 Yet thee, ill-fated *Thebes*! shou'd I pass o'er, 845  
 And lose th' Occasion, which returns no more,  
 I cannot hear thy Fall, nor view the Light  
 Of *Grecian* Fires with these dim Orbs of Sight.  
 Then yield we, Piety.—O Damsel, place  
 A Pile of Altars to th' immortal Race. 850  
 This done, the Nymph inspects with curious Eyes,  
 And tells her Sire, that ruddy Tops arise

From the divided Flames, but at the Height  
 The middle Fire emits a clearer Light;  
 Then she informs him doubtful, that the Blaze 855  
 Describ'd a Snake, roll'd up in circling Maze,  
 And varying, almost lost its bloody Hue,  
 And paints all to his intellectual View.  
 By her Instructions taught, the pious Sire  
 With Joy embrac'd the Wreath-encircled Fire, 860  
 And catches on his glowing Face, and Brows,  
 The Vapours, that the Will of Fate disclose.  
 His sordid Locks, now stiff with Horror, stand,  
 And lift above his Head the trembling Band:  
 You'd think, his Eyes unclos'd, his Cheeks resume  
 Their long-lost Colour, and exhausted Bloom. 866  
 At length he gave a Loose to Rage, and cried,  
 Ye guilty *Thebans*, hear what Fates betide  
 Your City, the Result of Sacrifice:  
 Its Safety may be bought, tho' high the Price. 870  
 The \* Snake of *Mars*, as his due Rite, demands  
 A human Victim from the *Theban* Bands;  
 Fall he, whoe'er amidst our num'rous Trains  
 The last of the fell Dragon's Race remains:  
 Thrice happy, who can thus adorn his Death, 875  
 And for so great a Meed resign his Breath!  
 Near the fell Altars of the boding Chief  
 Sad *Creon* stood, and fed his Soul on Grief:  
 Yet then he only wept his common Fate,  
 And the near-Ruin of th' *Aonian* State, 880  
 When sudden as the vengeful Shaft arrests  
 Some hapless Wretch, deep sinking in his Breasts,

\* The Dragon whose Teeth were sown by *Cadmus*.

Pale Horror fix'd him, when he hear'd the Call,  
Which summons brave *Menæceus* to his Fall.

A clammy Sweat crept cold o'er ev'ry Part, 885  
Fear froze his Veins, and thrill'd thro' all his Heart.  
Thus the *Trinacrian* Coast sustains the Tide  
Afar rebounding from the *Lybian* Side.

Whilst for the Victim the stern Prophet cries,  
Full of th' inspiring God, in suppliant Guise 890  
Around his Knees the tender Father clung,  
And strove in vain to curb his boding Tongue  
Swift Fame then makes the sacred Answer known,  
And the dread Oracle flies round the Town.

Now, *Clio*, say, who this young Warrior fir'd, 895  
And in his Breast Contempt of Death inspir'd!  
(For ne'er, in Absence of the Pow'rs divine,  
Cou'd Mortal harbour such a brave Design)

Pursue the mighty Theme: to thee alone  
The storied Deeds of early Times are known. 900  
*Jove's* fav'rite Goddess press'd the Throne, from whence  
The Gods rare Virtue's costly Gifts dispense  
Midst Earth's best Sons:—Whether Almighty *Jove*  
Consign'd it to them from well-founded Love,  
Or, mindful of their Merits, she might chuse 905  
In ample Breasts the glorious Sparks t' infuse;  
She sprung, all gladsome, from the Realms of Day:  
With Defence meet the brightest Stars give Way,

v. 895. Now, *Clio*, say] The Grandeur of this Machinery must delight every one, who has the least Tincture of Taste; and, indeed this whole Story is very affecting. The patriotic Heroism of *Menæceus* in particular, is finely contrasted by the tender Affection, and fatherly Love of *Creon*.

And Signs, which for their Feats and genuine Worth  
 Herself had fix'd in Heav'n.—She lights on Earth, 910  
 Her Face not far remote from Air,—appears  
 In *Mantbo's* Form, and looks of equal Years,  
 That her Responses might due Credit gain,  
 She quits awhile the Badges of her reign :  
 No more of Terror in her Eyes is seen ; 915  
 Smooth is her Brow, and less severe her Mien :  
 The Sword and Arms of Death are thrown aside,  
 And by the *Augur's* Staff their Place supply'd.  
 Her loosely-flowing Garments sweep the Ground,  
 And her rough laurell'd Hair with Fillets bound. 920  
 Yet her stern Visage, and the steps she trod  
 With longsome Strides reveal the latent God.  
 Thus smil'd the *Lydian* Queen, when she descry'd  
*Alcides*, stript of his terrific Hide,  
 Shine in embroider'd Vests, and Robes of Cost, 925  
 On his broad Back, and brawny Shoulders lost,  
 When *Pallas's* Arts with ill Success he try'd,  
 And broke the Timbrel, which in vain he ply'd.  
 Nor thee, *Menæceus*, does the Goddess find  
 Unworthy of the Honours she design'd : 930  
 Before the *Theban* Tow'rs she sees thee stand,  
 With early Worth preventing her Command.  
 Soon as th' enormous Portals wide unclose,  
 How didst thou quash the Pride of *Argive* Foes !

v. 923. *Thus smil'd the Lydian Queen*] The Fortitude of *Hercules*  
 was not equal to his Amorousness. He fell in Love with *Omphale*,  
 Queen of *Lydia*, and in order to win her Affections by his Obsc-  
 quiousness, condescended to change the Lion's Hide for a Suit of  
 Purple, and the Club for a Distaff.

Thus *Hæmon* rages too: but tho' you shine 935  
 Brothers in all, the greater Praise is thine.  
 The breathless Carcasses are heap'd around:  
 Sure flies each Dart, each Weapon bears a Wound.  
 Nor yet was Virtue present.—Ne'er he stands,  
 Unbent his Mind, unexercis'd his Hands: 940  
 His Arms no Leisure know, the Sphinx pourtray'd  
 Upon his Helm seems mad: the Blood survey'd,  
 Th' enliven'd Effigy springs forth to View,  
 And the dull Copper wears a brighter Hue:  
 When now the Goddess check'd his furious Hand, 945  
 And thus accosts him, as he lifts the Brand.  
 O noble Youth, whose Claim of Lineage *Mars*  
 With Joy accepts, resign these humble Wars;  
 This Palm is not thy Due.—The Stars invite  
 Thy Soul away, and promise more Delight, 950  
 My Sire now rages in the joyful Fane:  
 This Sense the Flames and Fibres ascertain,

v. 941. *The Sphinx pourtray'd*] Though some Readers may think this Image too bold, it is evident *Tasso* did not, from his Imitation of it. *Jerus. Del. Can. 9. St. 25.*

Porta il Soldan su'l elmo orrido e grande  
 Serpe, che si dilunga, e'l collo snoda  
 Su le zampe s'inalza, e l'ali spande,  
 E piega in arco la forcuta coda,  
 Par che tre lingue vibri, e che fuor mande  
 Livida spuma, e che l' suo fischio s' oda.  
 Ed or, ch' arde la pugna anch' ei s' infiamma  
 Nel moto, e fumo versa insieme, e fiamma.

v. 949. *The Stars invite*] These Verses are imitated by the last quoted Author, in the Second Book of his *Jerusalem*, where *Saphro* says to *Olindo*,

—— Lieto aspira alta superna fede:  
 Mira il ciel, com' e bello, e mira il sole,  
 Ch' a se par, che n' inviti, e ne console. *Span. 36.*

This *Phabus* urges: thee all *Thebes* demands,  
 To save the Rest of her devoted Bands.  
 Fame sings the sacred Answer, and our Youth 955  
 With Shouts of Triumph hail the Voice of Truth.  
 Embrace the glorious Offer then, nor waste  
 The Time away, but to Fruition haste,  
 Lest *Hæmon* start before thee.—Thus she spake,  
 And fann'd the Sparks of Virtue still awake; 960  
 Then, clearing all his Doubts with lenient Art,  
 She winds herself, unseen, into his Heart.  
 Swift as assail'd by *Jove's* unerring Aim,  
 The blasted Cypress takes th' ethereal Flame,  
 From Top to Stern with bright Contagion spread; 965  
 The Youth (so well her forceful Influence sped)  
 Feeds the new Ardours, kindled in his Breast,  
 And longs for Death, each meaner Thought suppress'd.  
 But when he 'gan at Leisure to survey  
 Her Gait and Habit, as she turns away, 970  
 And mingling with the Clouds, eludes his Eyes,  
 In Height of Admiration; thus he cries.  
 Willing, O Goddess, we obey thy Call,  
 Nor meet with passive Sloth the destin'd Fall:  
 —And while from Fight, obsequious, he withdrew,  
*Agreus* of *Pylos* near the Trenches flew. 976  
 At length, supported by his menial Train,  
 He goes: the Vulgar hail him o'er the Plain  
 With Names of Patriot, Champion, God, inspire  
 An honest Pride, and set his Soul on Fire. 980  
 And now to *Thebes* his hasty Course he bends,  
 Well-pleas'd to have escap'd his wretched Friends,  
 When *Creon* met him, and would fain accost,  
 But his Breath fail'd, his Utterance was lost.

Awhile both silent and dejected stand, 985  
 At length his Sire began with kind Demand.  
 Say, prithee, what new Stroke of Fortune calls  
 My Son from Fight, when *Greece* surrounds our Walls?  
 What worse than cruel War dost thou prepare,  
 Why do thy Eyes with Rage unwonted glare, 990  
 Why o'er thy Cheeks such savage Paleness reigns,  
 And ill thy Face a Father's Look sustains?  
 Heard'st thou the forg'd Responses? — It appears  
 Too well.— My Son, by our unequal Years,  
 I pray thee, and thy wretched Mother's Breasts, 995  
 Trust not, O trust not, what the Seer suggests.  
 Think'st thou, the Pow'rs, that haunt yon starry Height,  
 Vouchsafe to shed down intellectual Light  
 On such a Dotard, whose perpetual Gloom, 999  
 And Age approach th' incestuous Monarch's Doom?  
 Yet more — the King may deal with secret Fraud,  
 And for some End spread these Reports abroad,  
 For well I ween, he views with jealous Eye  
 Thy first-rate Valour, and Nobility.  
 Perchance these pompous Words, which we suppose  
 Divine, from his too fertile Brain arose. 1006  
 Give not thy heated Mind the Reins of Sway,  
 Allow some Interval, some short Delay:

v. 987. *Say, prithee*] One seldom meets with a finer Piece of dissuasive and pathetic Eloquence, than this Oration of *Creon*. The Circumstances of Distress shew a judicious Choice in the Poet, and are expressed in a very happy Manner. The Question *Creon* puts to his Son, in *Heard'st thou*, &c. and the preventing his Confusion by answering it himself, is a striking Instance of the Poet's Taste in the Use of Figures. The Odium he afterwards throws on *Esacles*, and the ridiculous Light he sets *Tiresias* in, to give Weight to his Dehortation, is very artful.



BOOK X. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 505

Impetuous Haste misguides us oft.—O grant  
This last, this modest Boon; tis all I want. 1010

So be thy Temples silver'd o'er with Age;  
So may a Father's Cares thy Thoughts engage,  
And cause the Fears, thy rash Designs inspire;  
Ne'er then, O ne'er forsake thy wretched Sire.  
Why should the Pledges of another's Love, 1015

And alien Parents thy Compassion move?  
If ought of Shame remains, first tend thy own:  
This is true Piety, and true Renown.

The other's a meer Shade, a transient Breath  
Of Fame, and Titles lost in gloomy Death. 1020

Nor think, I check thee thro' Excess of fear:

Go, mix in Combate — toss the pointed Spear,

And dare the thickest Horrors of the Plain:

Where Chance is equal, I will ne'er restrain.

O let me cleanse with Tears the Stain of Blood, 1025

And with my Hairs dry up the surging Flood:

Thus thou may'st fight, o'ercome and triumph still;

This is thy Country's Choice, thy Father's Will.

Thus in Embrace his troubled Son he holds,

And round his Neck his Arms encircling folds; 1230

But neither cou'd the copious Stream of Grief,

Nor Words unbend the Heav'n-devoted Chief.

Yet more, the Gods suggesting, he relieves

His Father's Fears, and with this Tale deceives.

O best of Parents! let not idle Fear 1035

Disturb thy Bliss: no Phrenzy of the Seer,

No Phantoms of the Dead, nor Signs from *Jove*

Sollicit me to quit this Light above.

Still may *Tirestias* to his Friends impart

The God's Response, and try each priestly Art: 1040

Nor should I lay aside my fix'd Design,  
 Tho' *Phæbus* warn me from his open Shrine.  
 But my dear Brother's sad Misfortune recalls  
 My willing Steps to these ill-omen'd Walls;  
 Pierc'd by an *Argive* Spear, my *Hæmon* lies 1045  
 Between both Hosts, and soon the *Grecians'* Prize:  
 So thick the Foe surrounds, that scarce I trust,  
 This Arm can reach him midst th' insanguin'd Dust.  
 But why do I delay? — Go, raise again  
 His drooping Spirits, and command the Train 1050  
 To bear him off with Care. — I haste to find  
*Ætion*, skill'd, o'er all the healing Kind,  
 To close up Wounds, to staunch the Flux of Blood,  
 And stop the Flight of Life's low-ebbing Flood.  
 His Speech broke off, away the Hero sped; 1055  
 A sudden Gloom his Father's Mind o'erspread:  
 His Love's divided, ill his Tears agree,  
 Yet he believes, impell'd by Destiny.  
 Meantime fierce *Capaneus* pursues the Train,  
 Whom *Tyrian* Portals vomit on the Plain, 1060  
 And swells with frequent Deaths the guilty Field:  
 Horse, Foot and Charioteers before him yield;  
 And, their pierc'd Drivers thrown, th' unbridled Steeds  
 Crush out their Souls, and thunder o'er the Meads.

v. 1059. *Mean time fierce Capaneus*] With what dreadful Pomp  
 is *Capaneus* ushered in here! in what bold Colours has the Poet  
 drawn his Impetuosity and Irresistibility, and what a grand Idea  
 does he give us of his Hero, when he tells us, that by his valorous  
 Feats he kept the *Greeks* in such a perpetual Round of Attention,  
 that they had not Time to reflect upon the Loss of their four Com-  
 manders, or if they did, that they thought *Capaneus* was equal to  
 all of them together, and that his Body was animated by their  
 Souls.

BOOK X. STATIUS's THEBAID. 507

He reeks in Blood, the lofty Tow'rs affails 1065  
 With Stones, and wheresoe'er he turns, prevails.  
 One while he plied his Sling, and dealt around  
 From swift-hurl'd Bullets a new Kind of Wound,  
 Then, launching forth a Dart, his Arm he swung  
 Aloft. No Weapon idle fell, he flung, 1070  
 Nor, innocent of Blood, return'd again,  
 But levell'd some proud Warrior on the Plain.  
 Their Place by him supplied, the *Grecian* Host  
 No longer deem their mightiest Leaders lost,  
*Oenides*, *Atalanta's* youthful Son, 1075  
*Amphiaraus*, and stern *Hippomedon*:  
 In him they meet, inspire an equal Flame,  
 And animate by Turns his vital Frame.  
 Nor Age, nor Rank, nor Form his Pity moves,  
 The proud and meek alike his Fury proves. 1080  
 Not one durst with him try the Chance of War,  
 Or stand in Arms oppos'd.—They dread from far  
 His temper'd Armour, his tremendous Crest,  
 And glitt'ring Helm, with various Forms imprest.  
 Meanwhile *Menaceus* on the Walls was seen, 1085  
 Divine his Aspect, more august his Mien:  
 His Casque aside the pious Hero threw,  
 And stood awhile, confess'd to public View;  
 From thence he cast an Eye of Pity down  
 On either Host, that fought before the Town, 1090  
 And, Silence and a Truce from War injoin'd,  
 Thus spoke the Purpose of his gen'rous Mind.  
 Ye Pow'rs of War, and thou, whose partial Love  
 Grants me this Honour, *Phæbus*, Son of *Jove*,  
 O give to *Thebes* the Joys so dearly sought, 1095  
 Those mighty Joys, by my own Life-blood bought:

Return the War, on *Lerna's* captive Coast  
 Dash the foul Remnants of her vanquish'd Host ;  
 And let old *Inachus* with adverse Waves  
 Shun his fam'd Offspring, now dishonour'd Slaves.  
 But let the *Thebans* by my Death obtain 1101  
 Their Fanes, Lands, Houses, Children, Wives again.  
 If ought of Merit my Submission claim,  
 If, undismay'd, I hear'd the Prophet name  
 Myself the Victim, nor with Fear withdrew, 1105  
 Assenting, ere my Country deem'd it true,  
 To *Thebes*, I pray, in lieu of me be kind,  
 And teach my cred'lous Sire to be resign'd.  
 He said, and pointing to his virtuous Breast  
 The glitt'ring Blade, attempts to set at Rest 1110  
 Th' indignant Soul, that frets and loaths to stay,  
 Imprison'd in its Tenement of Clay :  
 He lustrates with his Blood the Walls and Tow'rs,  
 And throws himself amidst the banded Pow'rs,  
 And, grasping still the Sabre in his Hands, 1115  
 Effays to fall on the stern *Grecian* Bands.  
 But Piety and Virtue bear away,  
 And gently on the Ground his Body lay ;  
 While the free Spirit stands before the Throne  
 Of *Jove*, and challenges the well-earn'd Crown. 1120

v. 1119. *While the free Spirit*] This Passage recalls to my Mind some fine Lines of *Lucan*, in which he describes the Residence of *Pompey's* Soul, after it was separated from the Body.

At non in Pharia manes jacuere favillâ :  
 Nec cinis exiguus tantam compefcuit umbram.  
 Profiluit huflo, femiufque membra relinquens,  
 Degeneremque rogum, fequitur convexa Tonantis,  
 Quâ niger aftriferis connectitur axibus Aer,  
 Quodque patet terras inter Lunæque meatus  
 Semidei manes habitant : quos ignea virtus

Now to the Walls of *Thebes* with joyful Care  
 The Hero's Corse, with Ease obtain'd, they bear.  
 The *Greeks* with decent Reverence survey  
 The solemn Pomp, and willingly give way:  
 On youthful Shoulders borne, amidst a Train 1125  
 Of either Sex, who break into a Lane,  
 He passes on, to Rank celestial rais'd,  
 And more than *Cadmus* or *Amphion* prais'd.  
 These o'er his lifeless Limbs gay Garlands fling;  
 Those single Flow'rs, the Produce of the Spring, 1130  
 And in his Ancestor's Time, honour'd Tomb  
 Depose the Body, od'rous with Perfume.  
 The Rites of Praise perform'd, they strait renew'd  
 The Combate.—Here, his Wrath at Length subdu'd,  
 In Groans the mournful *Creon* seeks Relief, 1135  
 And the sad Mother weeps away her Grief.  
 For cruel *Thebes* by me then wast thou bred,  
 And have I nourish'd thy devoted Head,  
 Like some vile Dame? —What Mischiefs have I done,  
 And to what Gods thus odious am I grown? 1140

Innocuos vitâ patientes ætheris imi  
 Fecit, & æternos animam collegit in orbes:  
 Non illuc auro positi, nec thure sepulti  
 Perveniunt; illic postquam se lumine vero  
 Implevit stellasque vagas miratur, et astra  
 Fixa Polis, vidit quanta sub nocte jaceret  
 Nostra dies, risitque sui ludibria trunci. *Pharf. Lib. 9.*

v. 1132. Od'rous] I cannot but think *adoratum* a typographical Error, and would therefore substitute *odoratum* in its stead, which those, who are acquainted with the funeral Rites of the Ancients will, I doubt not, approve of, it being the Custom to perfume the Bodies of the Dead before Burial. I hope the Reader will pardon this Conjecture, if he does not coincide with me.

No interdicted Pleasures did I prove,  
 Nor wast thou, Offspring of incestuous Love.  
*Jocasta's* Sons command the deathful Plain,  
 Fate gives the Scepter, and she sees them reign.

Let us for this ill-omen'd War atone, 1145  
 That they may mount by Turns the fully'd Throne.

(This pleases thee, O Cloud-compelling *Jove*)

Why censure I or Men or Gods above?

'Tis thou, *Menæceus*, who has caus'd my Fall;  
 On thee it rests, the guilty Source of all. 1150

From whence this Love of Death, that seiz'd thy Mind,  
 And holy Rage? how diff'rent in their Kind

From their sad Mother these my Children prove,  
 Fruits of my Throes, and Pledges of my Love!

Full well alas! the fatal Cause I read 1155

In the fell Snake, and War-producing Mead:

Hence headstrong Valour, impotent of Rest,

Usurp'd my Share in Guidance of thy Breast,

And, unconstrain'd, nay 'gainst the Will of Fate,

Thou wing'd thy Way to *Pluto's* gloomy State. 1160

Much of the *Greeks* and *Capaneus* I hear'd;

Yet this, this Hand alone was to be fear'd,

And Weapon, which imprudently I gave:

Yet why? — It was fit Present for the Brave

See, the wide Wound absorbs the Length of Sword,

Deep as the fiercest *Argive* could have gor'd. 1166

More had she said, unknowing Check or Bound,

And sadden'd with her Wailings all around;

But her consoling Comrades homeward led

Th' unwilling Dame, and plac'd her on the Bed: 1170

There, her torn Cheeks suffus'd with Blood, she lay,

Deaf to Advice, and sickn'ing at the Day;

And, her Voice gone, and all confus'd her Mind,  
Still kept her languid Eyes on Earth declin'd.  
The *Scythian* Tigris thus beneath some Cave 1175  
For her stol'n Whelps is often seen to rave,  
And, couching at the vasty Mouth alone,  
Scents the fresh Trace, and licks the tepid Stone.  
Her Hunger, Wrath, and native Rage subside,  
In Grief consum'd.— Securely by her Side, 1180  
With passive Impotency she surveys  
The Flocks and Herds on verdant Pasture graze,  
For where are those, for whom she now shou'd feed  
Her Dugs, and range, in quest of Prey, the Mead.  
Thus far have Arms and Death adorn'd our lays, 1185  
And War's grim Horrors been a Theme of Praise:  
Now be the Song to *Capaneus* transferr'd.  
No more I grovel with the vulgar Herd,

v. 1175. *The Scythian Tigris thus*] The Grief of *Menæceus's* Mother for the Loss of her Son, is aptly enough pourtray'd by this Simile of the Tigris; the Hint of it may have possibly been taken from the following Comparison in the Eighteenth Book of *Homer's Iliad*.

ὦ Πάρις ἄνδρ' ἀνδρῶν ἀνδρῶν  
ὦτ' ἴα' θ' ὑπὸ σκύμνῳ ἐλαφροῦ ἀρπάσῃ ἀνὴρ  
ἴλῃς ἐκ πυκνῆς. ὃ δὲ τ' ἄχιντο ὕπνῳ ἐλθόν.  
Πολλὰ δὲ τ' ἄγχι' ἐπ' αὐτῷ μετ' ἀνὴρ ἔχει ἱερῶν,  
Εἴ ποθεν ἐξυροῖ· μάλα γὰρ θυμὸς χεῖρ' αἰρεῖ. Verse 318.

This is natural enough, but the Images contained in

———— Tepidi lambit vestigia saxi.  
———— Eunt præter secura armenta, gregesque  
Aut quos ingenti premat expectata rapina.

Are perhaps equal to any thing in the *Homeric* Allusion.

v. 1185. *Thus far have Arms*] The Poet raises the Character of his Hero very much by this Invocation. One Muse suffic'd before, but he now summons all the *Nine*, by which the Grandeur of the Subject is very much enhanced, and the Difficulty of singing his great Exploits very strongly imaged.

But, catching Fury from th' *Aonian* Grove,  
 Uncircumscrib'd, thro' Realms of Æther rove. 1190  
 With me, ye Muses, prove the high Event.—  
 Whether from deepest Night this Rage was sent,  
 Or the dire Furies, rang'd beneath his Sign,  
 Impell'd him to confront the Pow'rs divine,  
 Or Rashness urg'd him on, or Lust of Fame, 1195  
 Which woos by per'lous Feats a deathless Name,  
 Or Preludes of Success, Heav'n sent to draw  
 The guilty Wretch, to break calm Caution's law;  
 He loaths all earthly Joys; the Rage of Fight  
 Palls on his Soul, and Slaughter shocks his Sight:  
 And, all his Quiver spent, he lifts on high 1201  
 His weary Arm, and points it to the Sky,  
 He rolls his wrathful Eyes round, metes the Height,  
 Of the tall Rampires, and th' unnumber'd Flight  
 Of Steps, and strait of two compacted Trees, 1205  
 A Ladder forms, to scale the Walls with Ease.  
 Now, dreadful from afar, he bares to View  
 A clefted Oak, that lighten'd as he flew:  
 His burnish'd Arms too ruddy Splendors yield,  
 And the Flame kindles on his blazing Shield. 1210  
 Virtue directs me by this Path (he cry'd)  
 To *Thebes*, by which the slipp'ry Tow'r is dy'd  
 With brave *Menæceus'* Blood.—Then let me try,  
 If sacred Rites avail, or *Phæbus* lie.  
 He said, and, mounting up the captive Wall 1215  
 By Steps alternate, menaces its Fall.  
 Such in mid' Air the fierce *Alcides* show'd,  
 When Earth's bold Sons with vain Ambition glow'd;  
 Ere *Pelion* (hideous Height) was hurl'd above,  
 Or *Ossa* cast a Shade on trembling *Jove*. 1220  
 Th' astonish'd



Th' astonish'd *Thebans* then, on th' utmost Verge  
 Of fated Ruin, the sharp Contest urge,  
 Nor less, than if *Bellona*, Torch in Hand,  
 Was bent to fire their Town, and waste their Land,  
 Huge Beams and Stones from ev'ry Quarter fling,  
 And ply with Haste the *Balearic* Sling : 1226  
 (For now no Hope, no Dawn of Safety lies  
 In Darts, and random Shafts, that wing the Skies)  
 Vast Engines too, in Passion's giddy Whirl,  
 And massy Fragments at the Foe they hurl. 1230  
 The Weapons, that from ev'ry Part are thrown,  
 Deter him not, nor fetch the Warrior down :  
 Hanging in empty Air, his Steps he guides,  
 Secure of Danger, and with longsome Strides,  
 As on plain Ground, maintains an equal Pace, 1235  
 Tho' Death on all Sides stares him in the Face.  
 Thus some deep River, thund'ring in it's Course,  
 Turns on an aged Bridge its watry Force :  
 And, as the loosen'd Stones and Beams give Way,  
 Doubles its Rage, and strives to wash away 1240  
 The Mass inert, nor ceases, till it sees  
 Th' obstructing Pile dispers'd, and flows with Ease.  
 Soon as he reach'd the Turret's long-sought Height  
 (Tho' lessen'd, yet conspicuous to the Sight)  
 And scar'd the *Thebans* with his bulky Shade, 1245  
 He cast a downward Look, and vaunting said.

v. 1237. *Thus some deep River*] I know nothing that can give us a more terrible Idea of *Capaneus* assaulting the *Theban* Fortifications, than this Comparison of a River's beating with Violence against a Bridge : There is great Majesty of Style, and Variety of Images in it, and the Simile itself contains such an exact Point of Likeness, as cannot fail of pleasing every Reader of Taste.

Are these the Bulwarks then, is this the Wall,  
 That erst obey'd *Amphion's* tuneful Call?  
 Are these the fabled Theme, and storied Boast  
 Of *Thebes*? shall these oppose our conq'ring Host? 1250  
 What Honour, tho' beneath our frequent Ströke  
 These Lyre-constructed Tow'rs should yield?—he spoke,  
 And with his Hands and Feet fast-hurling down  
 The Coins and Beams compacted, lays the Town  
 Part-open.—Then the Bridge-form'd Works divide,  
 And the Stone-Joists from off the Ridges slide. 1256  
 The Fortress broken down, again he takes  
 Advantage of the Ruin, which he makes,  
 And, gath'ring rocky Fragments, as they fall,  
 Destroys the Town with its own shiver'd Wall. 1260  
 Meantime round *Jove's* bright Throne the Pow'rs divine  
 For *Thebes* and *Greece* in fierce Contention join :  
 To both alike impartial, he descries  
 Their animated Wrath with careless Eyes.  
 Restrain'd by *Juno*, *Bacchus* inly groans; 1265  
 Then, glancing at his Sire, he thus bemoans.  
 O *Jove*, where is that cruel Hand, which aims  
 The forked Bolt, and lanches livid Flames,  
 My Cradle once?—*Sol* for those Mansions sighs,  
 Which erst he gave to *Cadmus*, as a Prize. 1270  
 His equal Love sad *Hercules* extends  
 To both, and doubts, whilst yet his Bow he bends;

v. 1261. *Mean time round Jove's bright Throne*] *Statius* gives the *Greeks* the same auxiliary Deities as *Homer* does. In this Particular he has shewn great Judgment, but still greater, in not imitating the ridiculous Battle of the Gods, which characterises the Twenty-first Book of the *Iliad*.

v. 1269. *My Cradle once*] The Poet alludes to the supposed Notion, that *Bacchus* was taken out of *Jupiter's* Thigh.

His Mother's \* Birth-place *Perseus* much laments,  
 And *Venus* for *Harmonia*'s People vents  
 Her Grief in Tears: suspicious of her Spouse, 1275  
 She stands aloof, and, wroth for broken Vows,  
 In secret *Mars* regards.—The martial Dame  
 On *Tyrian* Gods, audacious, casts the Blame :  
 A furious Silence tortures *Juno*'s Breast,  
 Yet nought avails to break th' Almighty's Rest ; 1280  
 Nay e'en the Strife had ceas'd, when in the Skies  
 The Voice of *Capaneus* was heard.—He cries.—  
 On Part of *Thebes* then no Immortals stand ;  
 Where are the Natives of the guilty Land,  
*Bacchus* and *Hercules* ? — It gives me Shame 1285  
 To challenge any of inferiour Name.  
 Come, *Jove*, (for who's more worthy to engage ?)  
 Thy Harlot's threat'ned Ashes claim thy Rage :  
 Come, gather all thy Lightning to the Blow,  
 And plunge me flaming to the Shades below : 1290  
 Abler perchance the timid Sea to scare,  
 With empty Sound, and unavailing Glare,  
 Or wreak thy Spite on *Cadmus*' bridal Bed. —  
 The Gods deep groan'd, yet nought in Rev'rence said.  
 Th' Eternal, smiling at his Rashness, shakes 1295  
 The Honours of his Head, and thus bespeaks.  
 Survives then mortal Pride dire *Pblegra*'s Fight,  
 And wilt thou too my slumbring Wrath excite ?  
 This hear'd, the Pow'rs eternal prompt his Hand  
 Long-ling'ring, and his vengeful Darts demand : 1300

\* *Argos*.

v. 1288. *Thy Harlot's threat'ned Ashes*] *Semele*, who was burnt by Lightning. Her Ashes were preserved in an Urn, and held in great Veneration by the *Thebans*.

Nor now the Partner of imperial State,  
*Saturnia*, durst resist the Will of Fate.  
 His regal Dome in *Empyreal* Heav'n  
 Spontaneous thunders, ere a Sign was giv'n.  
 The Show'rs collect, the clashing Clouds are join'd  
 In Conflict fierce, without one Blast of Wind: 1306  
 You'd think, *Iapetus* had broke his Chain,  
 Or fell *Typhæus* was releas'd again,  
*Inarime*, and *Ætna* rear'd on high.  
 Th'immortals blush to fear, but when they spy 1310  
 In mid-way Air an Earth-born Warrior stand  
 Oppos'd to *Jove*, and the mad Fight demand;  
 Th'unwonted Scene in Silence they admire,  
 And doubt, if he'll imploy th'etherial Fire.  
 Now 'gan the Pole just o'er th'*Ogygian* Tow'r 1315  
 To thunder, Prelude of Almighty Pow'r,  
 And Heav'n was ravish'd from each mortal Eye:  
 Yet still he grasps the Spires, he can't descry;  
 And, oft as Gleams shone thro' the breaking Cloud,  
 This Flash comes opportune (he cries aloud) 1320  
 To wrap proud *Thebes* in Fire: at my Demand  
 'Twas sent to wake anew my smould'ring Brand.  
 While thus he spake, the Lord of all above  
 Bar'd his right Arm, and all his Thunder drove:  
 Dispers'd in ambient Air, his Plumes upflew, 1325  
 And his Shield falls, discolour'd to the View;  
 And now his manly Members all lie bare:  
 Both Hosts, astounded at the dazling-Glare,  
 Recede, lest, rushing with his whelming Weight,  
 And flaming Limbs, he hasten on their Fate. 1330  
 His Helmet, Hair and Torch now hiss within,  
 And from the Touch quick shrinks his shudd'ring Skin;  
 He

He shoves his Mail away, amaz'd to feel  
 Beneath his Breast the Cinders of the Steel,  
 And places full against the hated Wall 1335  
 His smoking Bosom, left, half-burnt, he fall.  
 At length, his earthly Part resolv'd away,  
 The Spirit quits it's Prison-House of Clay;  
 And, had his hardy Corse consum'd more slow,  
 He might have well deserv'd a second Blow. 1340

v. 1340. *He might have well deserv'd*] I cannot conclude my Notes on this Book, without taking some Notice of the Exploits of *Capaneus*, which make in my Opinion the finest Part not only of this Book, but of the whole Work. There is great Strength of Imagination and an animated Turn of Expression in it, which must engage every one, who admires the Flights of an irregular and eccentric Genius. The Violence and Impetuosity of *Capaneus* is finely contrasted by the calm Consciousness of Superiority in *Jupiter*; but it may be observed, that as our Poet has elevated the Character of his Hero up to the Gods, so he has put that of the Gods upon a Level with Men: Witness that Hemistich,

Th' Immortals blush to fear.

This, however, is not the Fault of *Statius* in particular, but of all the Authors, who have introduced Machinery in their Poems.



**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE ELEVENTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

**T**HE Greeks being disheartened by the Death of Capaneus, the Thebans make a great Slaughter of them. Tisiphone persuades her Sister Megæra to assist her in forwarding the Duel between the two Brothers. Jupiter calls a Council of the Gods, and advises them to retire from the Sight of the Combate. Tisiphone goes in quest of Polynices, and by her Machinations prevails on him to challenge his Rival. He informs Adrastus of his Intention, whose Attempts to deter him from it are frustrated by the Fury. Eteocles returns Thanks to Jupiter for his Victory by a Sacrifice, which is attended with several inauspicious Omens. Æpytus bears the Challenge to the King. His Courtiers dissuade him from accepting it, but Creon insolently insists on it. Jocasta uses her Interest with him to hinder the Congress. Antigone addresses Polynices to the same Purpose, and would have gained her Point, had not the Fury interposed. They engage. Adrastus endeavouring in vain to part them, retreats to Argos. Piety descends from Heaven to the same Effect, but is repulsed by Tisiphone. Polynices overcomes Eteocles; but attempting to strip him of his Arms receives a mortal Wound. They both expire. Oedipus laments over their Bodies, and endeavours to kill himself, as does Jocasta, who is prevented by Ismene. Creon usurps the Crown, and prohibits the Burial of the dead Bodies. He then threatens to banish Oedipus who loads him with a Volley of Imprecations: Antigone intercedes and procures his Pardon. The Remains of the confederate Army decamp by Night, and fly to Adrastus's Dominions.



## T H E

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

**W**HEN dying *Capaneus* had now suppress'd  
 The daring Fury of his impious Breast,  
 And the vindictive Bolt, well-pleas'd to prove  
 Its Pow'r obsequious to the Will of *Jove*,  
 Spent on the Walls the Remnant of its Force, 5  
 And to the blasted Earth pursu'd its Course;  
 The Thunderer withholds his vengeful Hand,  
 Recalls the Day, and spares the guilty Land;

Among all the Books of the *Thebaid* there is none in which the Poet has conducted that Part which concerns the marvellous with greater Art und Address. The Intrigue of the Furies to procure a Duel between the two Rivals has something in it pleasingly terrible. Add to this the Spirit and Propriety of the several Speeches, among which those of *Eteocles*, *Polynices*, *Antigone* and *Oedipus* are Master-Pieces in their Kind, and inimitably beautiful. But, bating these Perfections, which characterize it in particular, the Subject and Matter of it in general is too interesting not to require a double Degree of Attention in perusing it. We see in the Conclusion of it poetical Justice administered with great Impartiality and Propriety; and the grand End of the Poem answered, which was the showing the ill Effects of Ambition, exemplified in the Death of the two Brothers. We are only therefore to look upon the twelfth Book as an ornamental Supplement, as the Poem might have ended here without violating the Laws of the *Epopœia*.

While from their Thrones sublime the Gods arise,  
 And hail with Shouts the Monarch of the Skies. 10  
 As when from *Phlegra* conq'ring he return'd,  
 And crush'd *Enceladus* his Anger mourn'd.  
 But *Capaneus*, consign'd to deathless Fame  
 For Acts, which *Jove* chastiz'd, but durst not blame,  
 Retains the Frowns which Death could not efface, 15  
 Whilst his huge Arms a shatter'd Tow'r embrace.  
 As *Tityus*, Monster of enormous Size,  
 Stretch'd o'er nine Acres near *Avernus* lies ;  
 Whose Giant-Limbs if chance the Birds survey,  
 They start, and trembling quit th' immortal Prey; 20  
 While still his fruitful Fibres spring again,  
 Swell, and renew the bold Offender's Pain.  
 Thus groan'd the Plain beneath th' oppressive Load,  
 And with bright Flames of livid Sulphur glow'd.  
 Now-paus'd the Battle; and the chosen Train 25  
 Of weeping Suppliants quit each hallow'd Fane.  
 Here all their Vows, here all their Sorrows cease,  
 And each fond Mother's Pray'r is hush'd in Peace.

v. 11. *Phlegra*] *Phlegra* was a City of *Macedonia*, where the Giants fought the Gods. It is situated under Mount *Pindus*.

v. 17 *As Tityus*] *Lucretius* has beautifully explained the Fable of *Tityus* according to its allegorical Sense.

Nec Tityon volucres ineunt Acheronte jacentem ;  
 Nec, quod sub magno scrutetur pectore, quidquam  
 Perpetuam ætatem poterunt reperire profecto,  
 Quamlibet immani projectu corporis existet,  
 Qui non sola novem dispersis jugera membris,  
 Obtineat, sed qui terræ totius orbem :  
 Non tamen æternum poterit perferre dolorem,  
 Nec præbere cibum proprio de corpore semper ;  
 Sed Tityos hic est nobis in amore jacentem  
 Quem volucres lacerant, atque exest anxius Angor ;  
 Aut aliâ quâvis scindunt Cuppedine curæ.

# BOOK XI. STATIUS's THEBAID. 523

Mean while the *Greeks* in broken Squadrons yield,  
 And to their Victor-Foes resign the Field. 30  
 They fear not human Threats, or hostile Darts,  
 But angry *Jove* unmans their drooping Hearts.  
 His Thunder-Storms still dwell upon their Ears,  
 And fancy'd Lightnings cleave the starry Spheres.  
 He seems himself to press the flying Band, 35  
 And launch his Bolts with unremitting Hand.  
 The *Theban* Monarch, eager to improve  
 The fair Occasion proffer'd him by *Jove*,  
 Pricks onward to the Rout, and o'er the Mead  
 With goring Spurs impells his foaming Steed. 40  
 Thus when the royal Savage gorg'd with Food,  
 Retires, th' inferior Natives of the Wood  
 Bears, Wolves, and spotted Lynxes haste away  
 To seize the scanty Relics of his Prey.

v. 33. *His Thunder-Storms*] Any Noise or Sight that makes a deep Impression on us, affects our Organs of Sensation, as it were by a Kind of *Eccho*, long after the Object is removed. It is thus we see *Adam* affected after the Angel's Relation.

The Angel ended, and in *Adam's* Ear  
 So charming left his Voice, that he awhile  
 Thought him still speaking. *Par. Lost*, B. 8. L. 1.

It is thus we must account for the seeming Inconsistency in the following Verses of *Homer*.

Ἦτοι ὅτ' ἐς ὤφθαλμον τὸ Τροϊκὸν ἄσπετον,  
 Θάμναζεν πυρὰ πόλεω, τὰ καίτε Ἰλίοθι πρό,  
 Αὐτῶν, εὐρυγύνη τ' ἐνοπία, ὁμαδὴν τ' ἀνδράπων. B. 10.

or as *Aristotle* answers a Criticism of some Censurers of *Homer* on this Place. who asked, how it was that *Agamemnon*, shut up in his Tent in the Night, could see the *Trojan* Camp at one View, and the Fleet at another, as the Poet represents it? Το δὲ κατὰ μεταφορὰν εἰρηται (says he) that is, tis only a metaphorical Manner of Speech; To cast out's Eye, means but to reflect upon, or to revolve in one's Mind; and that employed *Agamemnon's* Thoughts in his Tent, which had been the chief Object of his Sight the Day before.

*Eury-*

*Eurymedon* succeeds, who Weapons bore 45  
 Of Form uncouth, and rustic Armour wore;  
*Pan* was his boasted Sire: like him he courts  
 A modest Fame, and shines in rural Sports.  
 Next came *Alatreus*, flush'd with early Fire,  
 And matching, while a Boy, his youthful Sire. 50  
 Thrice happy both, but far more envy'd he,  
 Whom Fate adorn'd with such a Progeny.  
 Their Years unequal, equal their Renown,  
 By both with equal Strength the Dart was thrown.  
 Where the deep Trench in Length extended lay, 55  
 Compacted Troops stand wedg'd in firm Array.  
 Alas! how fickle is the God of Fight!  
 How vain, oppos'd to Heav'n, is human might!  
 The *Greeks*, who late the Walls of *Cadmus* scal'd,  
 In Turn behold with Grief their Tents assail'd. 60  
 As driving Clouds before a Whirlwind fly,  
 And break and scatter thro' the ruffled Sky;

v. 61. *As driving Clouds*] As some Critics have objected against heaping Comparisons one upon another, to prevent any Prejudices which the unwary Reader may form, we shall lay before him Mr. Pope's Defence of the following Verses of *Homer*.

Οὐτε θαλάσσης κυμα τόσων βόαι ποτι χερσιν,  
 Παντοῖδ' ἐρυμῶν ποτι βοῶν κλιγείη.  
 Οὐτε πυρρὸς τόσος γὰρ ποτι βρομῷ αἰδοῖσθαι,  
 Οὐρὸς αὖ βροχῆς, οἷ τ' αἴτε καίμην ὕλην.  
 Οὐτ' αἰμὲρ τόσους ποτι θύοισιν ὑψιλομίσθην  
 ἦπυι, οἷ μαλίστα μέγα βρομῆται χαλιπαίων.

In this Case (says he) the principal Image is more strongly impressed on the Mind by a Multiplication of Similies, the natural Product of an Imagination labouring to express something vast: but finding no single Idea sufficient to answer its Conceptions, it endeavours, by redoubling the Comparisons, to supply this Defect. The different Sounds of Waters, Winds and Flames, being as it were united in one. We have several Instances of this Sort even in so castigated and reserved a Writer as *Virgil*, who has joined

As angry Billows lave the rocky Strand,  
 And now disclose, and now o'erwhelm the Sand;  
 Or when on *Ceres* southern Gusts descend, 65  
 Before the Blast the nodding Harvests bend:  
 Thus fall the rough *Tyrinthian* Youths beneath  
 The Scythe of Death, who like *Alcides*, sheath  
 Their Limbs in savage Trophies. From on high  
 Their Patron views their hapless Destiny, 70  
 And pities, as he marks their shaggy Spoils,  
 Memorials of his own illustrious Toils.  
*Enipeus*, urg'd by some unfriendly Pow'r,  
 O'erlook'd the Conflict from a *Grecian* Tow'r;  
 Of either Army none was more renown'd 75  
 The Warrior-Trumpet in the Field to sound:

joined together the Images of this Passage in the fourth *Georgic*, and applied them, beautifully softened by a Kind of Parody, to the Buzzing of a Bee-hive.

Frigidus ut quondam sylvis immurmurat Ausfer,  
 Ut mare sollicitum stridet refluentibus undis,  
 Aestuatur ut clausis rapidus fornacibus ignis. v. 261.

*Tasso* has not only imitated this particular Passage of *Homer*, but likewise added to it. Canto 9. *Sianza* 22.

Rapido sì che torbida procella  
 Da' cavernosi monti esce più tarda:  
 Fiume, ch' arbori insieme, e case svella:  
 Folgore, che le torri abbatta, & arda:  
 Terremoto, che'l mondo empia d'orrore,  
 Son picciole sembianze al suo furore.

v. 76. *The Warrior-Trumpet*] *Statius* has been blamed by some ingenious Philologists for confounding the Manners of the Times he wrote of, with those of the Times he lived in, by introducing a Trumpeter upon the Stage. They quote *Eustathius* and *Didymus*, to prove that the Use of that Instrument was not known during the *Theban* War. But with Deference to their superior Abilities, we must beg Leave to observe, that the Testimony of the Poet is much more valid than that of the abovementioned Authors, as he lived

But while, an Advocate for speedy Flight,  
 He founded a Retreat from adverse Fight,  
 Hurl'd by some envious Foe, a whizzing Spear  
 Transfix'd his Hand, and nail'd it to his Ear: 80  
 Nor ceas'd the Clarion, when the Hand of Death  
 Impos'd a Truce, and Fate suppress'd his Breath,  
 But, to th' Amazement of the list'ning Throngs,  
 Th' unvary'd soothing Strain a while prolongs.  
 Mean Time the Fiend, embolden'd by Success, 85  
 And pleas'd to view the *Grecian* Hosts' Distress,  
 Thinks nothing done, till fir'd with mutual Rage,  
 The Rival-Kings in impious Fight engage.  
 And lest, unaided, her Attempts should fail,  
 When Force combin'd might easily prevail, 90  
*Megara* Partner of her Toils she makes,  
 And summons to the Charge her kindred Snakes.  
 For this a Passage with her *Stygian* Blade  
 In a lone Valley for her Voice she made;  
 And mutters Words, that shook the Depth of Hell, 95  
 And rous'd the Fury from her gloomy Cell:

lived nearer those Times, and consequently had a better Opportunity of making Researches and Enquiries. *Virgil* has likewise introduced it as used in the *Trojan* War, which was not long after that of *Thebes*, and the sacred Writers make mention of them very frequently in their History of Ages at least as early as this.

v. 81. *Nor ceas'd the Clarion*] The Hint of this beautiful Circumstance seems taken from the Description of *Orpheus's* Death in the fourth Book of the *Georgics*.

Tum quoque marmoreâ caput a cervice revulsum,  
 Gurgite cum medio portans Ocagrius Hebrus  
 Volveret, Eurydicen vox ipsa et frigida lingua,  
 Ah miseram Eurydicen, animâ fugiente, vocabat.

Then a loud-hissing horned Snake she rears,  
 Conspicuous midst the matted Tuft of Hairs :  
 Earth groans disparting at the dreadful Sound,  
*Olympus* trembles, and the Deeps rebound ; 100  
 While, wak'd to sudden Wrath, th' etherial Sire  
 Demands his Bolts, and threatens the World with Fire.  
 Her Comrade at the distant Summons shook,  
 As near her Parent's Side her Stand she took :  
 While *Capaneus* harangues th' assembled Ghosts, 105  
 And loud Applauses rend the *Stygian* Coasts.  
 Swift from the baleful Regions of the dead  
 Th' ascending Monster bar'd her horrid Head.  
 The Shades rejoice : the circling Clouds give Way,  
 And Hell exults with unexpected Day. 110  
 Her Sister flew to meet her, swift as Wind ;  
 And thus unfolds the Purpose of her Mind.  
 Thus far our Father's harsh Commands I've borne,  
 Alone on Earth, expos'd to Mortals' Scorn,  
 While you, exempt from War and hostile Rage, 115  
 The pliant Ghosts with gentle Sway assuage :  
 Nor are my Hopes deceiv'd, or Labours vain ;  
 Witness this crimson Stream, and reeking Plain :  
 To me dread *Pluto* owes the num'rous Shades,  
 That swarm in *Styx*, and the *Letbean* Glades. 120

v. 97. *Then a]* The Ceraustes has Horns like a Ram's, and a very small Body. It was probably from this Description *Milton* took the Hint of the following Verses.

But on they roll'd in Heaps, and up the Trees  
 Climbing, fat thicker than the snaky Locks  
 That curl'd *Megara* : *Par. Lost*, B. 10. V. 558.

v. 113. *Thus]* One cannot sufficiently admire the Fire, Spirit, and Propriety of this Oration, and with what Art the Character of the Fury *Tisiphone* is supported.

These are my Triumphs, this the dire Success  
 Acquir'd by Toils, and purchas'd with Distress.  
 Let *Mars* command the Fates of either Host,  
 'Tis not of vulgar Deaths alone I boast:

Ye saw (for sure his Figure must command 125  
 Your Notice, as he stalk'd along the Strand)  
 A martial Chief, whose Terror-breathing Face  
 And Hands black Streams of lukewarm Gore disgrace,  
 Inspir'd by me, on human Flesh he fed,  
 And with his Teeth defac'd the Victor's Head. 130

Ye heard (for Nature felt the Thunder-Shock,  
 That might have riv'd an Adamantine Rock)  
 When *Jove* in all his Terrors sate array'd,  
 And summon'd all the Godhead to his Aid,  
 To wreak his Vengeance on a Son of Earth, 135  
 I smil'd, for such a Scene provok'd my Mirth.

But now (for ever unreserv'd and free  
 I trust the Secrets of my Soul to thee)  
 My Hands refuse the blunted Torch to rear,  
 And the tir'd Serpents loath this upper Air. 140

But thou, whose Rage as yet entire remains,  
 Whose snaky Tire its wonted Health retains;  
 Thy Forces join, and all my Labours share,  
 For Schemes like these demand our utmost Care.

Faint as I seem, from Toil I shall not breathe, 145  
 Till the two Brother-Kings their Swords unsheath.  
 On this I stand resolv'd, tho' Nature plead,  
 And start recoiling at th' accursed Deed.

Great is the Task, then let us steel our Hearts  
 With Rage, and act with Vigour each our Parts. 150

Whence



Whence these Delays? for once forget to spare,  
 And choose the Standards you prefer to bear.  
 They both are tutor'd ready to our Hands,  
 And, fir'd by Discord, wait but our Commands.  
 Yet will, I fear, *Antigone* prevail, 155  
 And with her artful Conduct turn the Scale,  
 Or *Oedipus*, whose importuning Pray'r  
 Experience tells us oft has urg'd to spare.  
 Oft is he seen from Converse to retire,  
 In secret weep, and act again the Sire. 160  
 For this my bold Excursion I postpone  
 To *Thebes*, despairing to succeed alone.  
 Then let the banish'd Prince your Cares engage,  
 Left Length of Time o'ercome his less'ning Rage.  
 But most beware, lest mild *Adrastus* sway 165  
 His youthful Mind, and interrupt the Fray.  
 Their Parts assign'd, the Sister-Furies sped  
 Each diff'rent Ways, as their Engagements led.  
 As when two Winds from adverse Quarters try  
 With equal Lungs their Titles to the Sky, 170  
 Beneath the Blast the Waves and Woods resound,  
 And one mishapen Waste deforms the Ground.

v. *And choose the Standards*] The Meaning of this is, choose whether you will inspirit *Eteocles* or *Polynices* to the Combat.

v. 169. *As when*] The Winds perhaps have been the Subject of more Comparisons than any one Thing in Nature. *Homer, Virgil*, and the greatest Geniuses of ancient and modern Times abound in them, out of which the following comes nearest our Author's.

Adversu rupto ceu quondam turbine venti  
 Confligunt, Zephyrusque Notusque & lætus Eois  
 Euræ equis, stridunt sylvæ : sævitque tridenti  
 Spumeus, atque imo Nereus ciet æquora fundo. *Æn. B. 2.*

# 530 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK XI.

The mourning Hinds their various Loss deplore,  
 Yet thank that Lot which kept them safe on Shore.  
 When *Jove*, enthron'd in open Air, survey'd 175  
 The Day polluted with a double Shade,  
 While murky Spots obscur'd the low'ring Skies  
 And *Phabus* :—Aeternly to the Gods he cries.  
 We saw the Furies impious Combate wage,  
 And brook'd, while Moderation check'd their Rage :  
 Though one to Fight unequal durst aspire, 181  
 And fell the Victim of celestial Ire.  
 But Deeds approach, as yet on Earth unknown,  
 For which the Tears of Ages can't atone.  
 O turn your Eyes, nor let the Gods survey 185  
 The fatal Horrors of this guilty Day.  
 Sufficient was the Specimen, I ween,  
 When *Sol*, disgusted at the Rites obscene  
 Of impious *Tantalus*, recall'd his Light ;  
 And now again ye mourn a sudden Night. 190  
 Great as the Crime appears at Mercy's Pray'r  
 The Tenants both of Heav'n and Earth I spare.  
 But Heav'n forbid, *Astræa*'s chaster Eye,  
 Or the fair Twins such hellish Acts descry.  
 The Thund'rer spoke, and as he turn'd away, 195  
 A sudden Gloom o'erwhelm'd th' inverted Day.  
 Mean while the Virgin Daughter of the Night  
 Seeks *Polynices* thro' the Ranks of Fight.

v. 195. *And as he turn'd, &c.*] This Fiction of *Jupiter*'s turning away his Eyes is borrowed from the following Lines in the 16th Book of *Homer*.

The God, his Eyes averting from the Plain,  
 Laments his Son, destin'd to be slain,  
 Far from the *Lynian* Shores, his native Reign.

}  
*Poet's Iliad.*  
 Beneath

# BOOK XI: STATIUS'S THEBAID. 531

Beneath the Gate the musing Chief he found,  
 For various Omens did his Soul confound. 200  
 Yet unresolv'd to tempt his doubtful Fate,  
 And in a Duel end the stern Debate.  
 He saw, as roaming in the Gloom of Night  
 Along the Trench he ponder'd on the Fight,  
*Argia's* Image pensive and forlorn, 205  
 Her Torches broken, and her Tresses torn.  
 (For *Jove's* all-gracious Will had thus decreed  
 To warn him of the near-approaching Deed)  
 In vain the Warrior importun'd to tell  
 The Motive of her Flight, and what befell: 210  
 Nought to the tender Question she replies,  
 But from his Sight, the Tears fast-falling, flies.  
 Yet well, too well he guess'd the fatal Cause,  
 That his fair Consort from *Mycene* draws,  
 Discerns the dire Prediction of his Death, 215  
 And trembles, to resign his vital Breath.  
 But when the Goddess thrice her Scourge had ply'd,  
 And smote the Mail that glitter'd on his Side;  
 He raves, he burns with Fury not his own,  
 Nor seeks so much to mount the *Theban* Throne, 220  
 As o'er his slaughter'd Brother to expire  
 At length he thus accosts his aged Sire.  
 Too late, O best of Fathers, I've decreed  
 In single Fight to conquer or to bleed,

v. 223. *Too late*] This Speech of *Polynices* is not without its particular Graces. There is an Air of Majesty and Greatness that dignifies the whole; and the beautiful Confusion and Irregularity that it displays is excellently adapted to the Circumstances of the Speaker. In the Beginning of it he blames himself for not preventing the vast Effusion of Blood by a single Combat with his Brother *Eteocles*. He then artfully sounds *Adrastus* concerning his Affection

When only I of all my Peers survive, 225  
 For nought but Misery condemn'd to live.  
 O had I thus determin'd, ere the Plain  
 Yet whiten'd with the Bones of Thousands slain,  
 Rather than see the Flow'r of *Argos* fall,  
 And royal Blood begrime the guilty Wall. 230  
 Say, was it just, I should ascend the Throne,  
 Thro' which so many widow'd Cities moan.  
 Yet since too late the Wreaths of Praise I claim,  
 Revenge shall prompt, and act the Part of Fame.  
 Say, can one Spark of Pity warm thy Breast 255  
 For him who robb'd thy antient Limbs of Rest,  
 For him, by whose unhappy Conduct led,  
 And in whose Cause so many Chiefs have bled.  
 This well thou know'st, tho' willing to conceal  
 My shameless Actions thro' paternal Zeal. 240  
 O had I dy'd, ere to these Walls I fled;  
 But wreak thy Vengeance on my guilty Head.  
 To single Combat I my Brother dare.  
 'Tis thus resolv'd. For Fight I now prepare.  
 Nor thou dissuade: for by almighty *Jove* 245  
 Thy Pray'rs and Tears must ineffectual prove.  
 Should e'en my Parents, half dissolv'd in Tears,  
 Or Sisters rush between our clashing Spears,  
 And fondly strive to check my furious Course,  
 They strive in vain: for vain are Art and Force. 250  
 Say, shall I drink the little that remains  
 Of *Grecian* Blood, and waste it on the Plains?

Affection, with a View to the Request he afterwards makes. In short, our Author has approved himself no less skilful in moving the Passions than in describing the more tumultuous Scenes of War, and Devastation.

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I saw, unmov'd, th' unclosing Earth give Way,  
 And snatch the Prophet from the Realms of Day.  
 I saw the Blood of gen'rous *Tydeus* spilt, 255  
 A more than equal Partner of his Guilt.  
 In vain th' *Arcadian* Queen and *Tegea* raves,  
 While this her Son, and that her Monarch craves.  
 Why fell I not like bold *Hippomedon*,  
 Surcharg'd with martial Wreaths and Trophies won.  
 Why durst I not, like *Capaneus*, engage,  
 And mingle mortal with immortal Rage?  
 What coward Terrors check my trembling Hand?  
 Avaunt.—I give the Justice ye demand.  
 Here let the childless Matron, hoary Sire, 285  
 And youthful Widow, flush'd with am'rous Fire,  
 With all, whose Joys I crop'd before the Time,  
 Convene, and curse me for the fatal Crime.  
 Here let them stand Spectators of the Fray,  
 And for my Foe with Hands uplifted pray. 270  
 And now, my Spouse, and all that's dear, adieu;  
 Nor thou, O King, beyond the Grave pursue  
 Thy Vengeance; nor to us alone impute  
 The Guilt, which Heav'n partakes; but grant my Suit,  
 And rescue from my conqu'ring Brother's Ire 275  
 My last Remains.—This only I require.  
 O may thy Daughter happier Nuptials prove,  
 And bless a Chief more worthy of her Love.  
 He paus'd; and manly Tears their Cheeks o'erflow;  
 Thus, when returning Spring dissolves the Snow, 280

v. 279. *He 'paus'd]* *Ariosto* has imitated this Simile in the 36th Canto of his *Orlando furioso*. Stanza 40.

Come a meridional tiepidi venti,

Of *Hæmus* nothing save the Name remains,  
 And *Rhodope* sinks level with the Plains.  
 To calm his Passion with the Words of Age,  
 And moderate his now-redoubled Rage,  
 Essay'd *Adrastus*; but the *Stygian* Queen 285  
 Broke off his Speech with a terrific Scene.  
 A winged Steed, and fatal Arms she brought;  
 And lest he flag, to sudden Pity wrought;  
 A polish'd Helm she fix'd upon his Head,  
 And thus, in Aspect like *Perintbus*, said. 290  
 No more Delays.—The Object of thy Hate,  
 (As Fame informs us) issues from the Gate,  
 The Fiend prevails, and mounting him by Force,  
 With Joy beholds him take the wish'd-for Course:  
 Pale as a Spectre, o'er the Plain he flies, 295  
 And her dire Shadow, looking round, descries.  
 In vain the *Theban* Leader sought to prove  
 His Gratitude to Cloud-compelling *Jove*  
 By sacred Honors.—The celestial Sire  
 Unheeding sees the curling Fumes aspire. 300  
 Nor to the Fane one Deity descends;  
*Tisiphone* alone the Rites attends.  
 Amid the Croud she stands, and wafts his Vows  
 From *Jove* to *Proserpine*'s tremendous Spouse.

Che spirano dal mare il fiato caldo;  
 Le nevi si dissolvono e i torrenti,  
 E'l ghiaccio, che pur dianzi era se saldo:

v. 285. *But ibe Stygian Queen*] The Introduction of the Fury *Tisiphone* as the Authoress of the Duel is imitated from the seventh Book of the *Æneid*, where *Aleto* is engaged in almost the same illaudable Office. And perhaps after the Reader has well weighed the two Passages together, and observed with what Art the Machinery is conducted by our Poet, he will not think the Copy much inferior to the Original.

O thou, from whom (though envying *Argos* boast 305  
*Saturnia's* Presence on her favour'd Coast)

We sprung, a Race of Origin divine,  
 What Time, a Votary to *Cupid's* Shrine,  
 Great *Jove* was seen in less than human Shape,  
 Our Orgies interrupted by the Rape, 510

Whilst on thy Back the cheated Fair-one rode,  
 Unconscious of th' Embraces of a God.  
 Nor only then (if we may credit Fame)  
 Wert thou enamour'd of a *Theban* Dame.

At length our Walls have prov'd thy grateful Sense  
 Of ancient Services : as in Defence 515

Of thy own Heav'n the vengeful Thunders roll'd,  
 Such as our Sires with Horror heard of old.

Accept these Off'rings then, thy Mercies claim,  
 Nor let in vain the votive Altars flame. 320

Let these suffice.—Our best Endeavours prove  
 A trivial Recompence for heav'nly Love.

To *Bacchus* and *Alcides* we resign  
 This Office, where tis their's alone to shine.  
 He paus'd ; when bursting forth with sable Glare, 325  
 The Flames invade his Diadem and Hair.

v. 313. *Nor only their*] The Lady here hinted at is *Semele*, to whom he alludes in the following Verse.

' Such as our Sires with Horror heard of old.'

v. 325. *When bursting*] This ominous Incident seems taken from *Virgil*, who says in his seventh *Æneid*.

Præterea castis adeolet dum altaria tædis,  
 Et juxta genitorem astat Lavinia virgo :  
 Visa nefas, longis comprehendere crinibus ignem,  
 Atque omnem ornatum flammâ crepitante cremari,  
 Regalesque accensa comas, accensa coronam  
 Insignem gemmis : tam fumida lumine fulvo  
 Involvi, ac totis Vulcanum spargere testis.

V. 71.

The Victim then, uninjur'd by the Wound,  
 With bloody Foam distain'd the sacred Ground,  
 At the bright Altar aim'd a furious Stroke,  
 And thro' th' opposing Crowd impetuous broke. 330  
 Forth from the Fane the pale Attendants spring,  
 And the sage Augur scarce consoles the King.  
 At length he issues Orders to renew  
 The Rites, and screens his Fears from public View.  
 Thus *Hercules*, when first he felt the Pains 335  
 Of the slow Poison raging in his Veins,  
 Patient awhile his Part at th' Altar bore :  
 Then, as his Anguish grew at ev'ry Pore,  
 Gave Vent to Groans that pierc'd the pitying Skies,  
 And wildly left th' unfinish'd Sacrifice. 340  
 Whilst anxious Cares perplex his tortur'd Mind,  
 Young *Epytus* (his Porter's Charge assign'd  
 To Substitutes less swift of Foot) drew near,  
 And, panting, thus salutes the royal Ear.  
 O wave these Rites, ye solemnize in vain ; 345  
 Nor let such Cares withhold you from the Plain.

v. 335. *Thus Hercules*] I believe most of my Readers are acquainted with the History of this Affair : and therefore shall make no Apology for referring those who are not to *Seneca*, who has written a Play on this Subject, entitled *Hercules Octavius*.

v. 345. *O wave these Rites*] From the Beginning of this Speech to the Close of the Book there is a constant Succession of all the Graces of Poetry. The pleasing and terrible, the sublime and the pathetic are here work'd up to Perfection, and shewn in their proper Colours. They not only force the Reader's Attention, but Admiration. The Distress is here wound up to its highest Pitch, and the Characters of *Eteocles*, *Polynices*, *Antigone* and *Oedipus* admirably supported. The Reader will I hope excuse this and other Sallies of Enthusiasm, it is but natural for a Translator to have some Predilection for his Author, which may sometimes transport

a young



# BOOK XI. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 537

When Groves of hostile Spears beset our Gates,  
 Our Fate depends on Action, not Debates.  
 Thy Foe, O Monarch, thunders at the Walls;  
 And thee to combatè, thee alone he calls. 350  
 His Comrades turn away, and while he speaks,  
 Sighs heave each Breast, and Tears bedew their Cheeks.  
 His Army vent their Murmurs to the Skies;  
 At length in Agony of Grief he cries,  
 Say, why was guiltless *Capaneus* destroy'd, 355  
 Here rather be thy Bolts, O *Jove*, employ'd?  
 In the King's Breast now Fear and Anger wage  
 A short-liv'd War, but soon are lost in Rage.  
 Thus when the Victor-Bull hears from afar  
 His exil'd Rival hast'ning to the War, 360  
 He stalks, exulting in collected Might  
 Foams with Excess of Rage, and hopes the Fight:  
 His Heels the Sand, his goring Horns provoke  
 The passive Air with many a well-aim'd Stroke.

a young critic, too far. It is hop'd however that Men of Taste will acknowledge that *Statius* in this Book deserves an high degree of Praise and Admiration.

v. 359. *Thus when, &c.*] The Reader may compare this with the following Simile from *Tasso*.

Non altramente il Tauro, ove l'irriti  
 Gelofo amor con stimuli pungenti,  
 Horribilmente mugge, e co' muggiti  
 Gli spirti in se risveglia, e l'ire ardenti,  
 E'l corno aguzza ai tronchi, e par, ch'inviti  
 Con vani colpi alla battaglia i venti,  
 Sparge co'l piè l'arena, e'l suo rivale  
 Da lunge sfida à guerra aspra, e mortale.

*Gierns. C. 7. St. 55.*

538 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK XL

While the fair Herd, with anxious Horror mute, 366  
 Expect the Issue of the stern Dispute,  
 Nor were they wanting, who the King befriended;  
 Let him his empty Wrath, unheeded, spend  
 On these our Walls: nor wonder, shou'd he dare  
 E'en greater Things, when prompted by Despair. 370  
 In rash Exploits, and fruitless Schemes t' engage,  
 Is the last Effort of declining Rage.  
 Rest thou secure, and trust to us alone,  
 Whose Arms shall guard thee on the well-earn'd Throne.  
 At thy Command all *Thebes* shall arm again: 375  
 Thus spake of Sycophants th' encircling Train.  
 But *Creon* took Advantage of the Times,  
 To tell the Monarch of his num'rous Crimes.  
 A Spirit yet untam'd and uncontroll'd  
 With Grief for brave Menæceus made him bold. 380  
 No Rest he knows: alike are Day and Night.  
 His Son is ever present to his Sight.  
 Still he beholds him falling from the Tow'r,  
 While his torn Breast emits a bloody Show'r.  
 As still the Monarch on the Challenge mus'd: 385  
 Dar'd not accept it, nor had yet refus'd:  
 He cries. — O Tyrant insolent and base!  
 Employ'd by Heav'n to plague a guilty Race,

v. 387. O Tyrant] Notwithstanding the great Character of *Drances's* Invektive in the 11th Book of the *Æneid*, this of *Creon* may at least bear to be compar'd with it. If the former is full of spirited Satire and humorous Sarcasms, the latter is no less so, to which are superadded some fine Strokes of the *Pæthos*, which the Subject of *Drances's* Speech would not admit of. But as general Remarks are less convincing than Particulars, we shall confront some parallel Passages.

BOOK XI. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 539

No longer hope the *Thebans* to command,  
 And meanly conquer by another's Hand. 390  
 No longer shalt thou here in soft Repose  
 Insult our Fears, and triumph in our Woes.  
 Too long beneath the Wrath of *Jove* we've groan'd,  
 And for another's Perjuries aton'd.  
 No longer *Thebes* her treasur'd Wealth can boast, 395  
 Her youthful Warriors, and well-peopled Coast :  
 So few are left, that shou'd'st thou longer sway,  
 Slaves wou'd be even wanted to obey.  
 Some hath *Ismenos* wafted to the Deep,  
 And some, depriv'd of fun'ral Honors, sleep 400  
 While others seek their Limbs dispers'd around,  
 Or prove their Art on many a mortal Wound.  
 Restore our Brothers, Sires, and Sons their own,  
 Nor let our desert Fields and Houses moan.  
 Say, why is *Dryas* absent now so long, 405  
*Eubœa*'s Leaders, and the *Phocian* Throng ?  
 Yet them th' impartial Arbiter of Fight  
 Consign'd to Mansions of eternal Night.  
 But thou, my Son, as worthy that alone,  
 Hast fallen to secure the Tyrant's Throne, 410

v. 393. *Too long*] So *Virgil*.

O Latio caput horum & causa malorum !  
 Pone animos, & pulsus abi : sat funera fusi  
 Vidimus, ingentes & desolavimus agros.

v. 399. *Some hath Ismenos*]

Nos, animæ viles, inhumata, inflectaque Turba,  
 Sternamur campis.

v. 407 *Yet them*] The Transition from the Death of the other  
 Heroes to that of his Son is very artfully conducted, and merits  
 the highest Applause from all Lovers of the pathetic.

# 540 STATIUS'S THEBAID. Book XII

Devoted as the First-fruits of the War.

To *Mars*, a Sacrifice the Gods abhor.

And shall our King (O Scandal to the Name)

Delay when challeng'd to assert his Claim?

Or does *Tiresias* bid another go,

415

And basely frame new Oracles of Woe?

'For why should *Hæmon* any longer live,

'And his more gen'rous Brother still survive?

Let him defend thy Right to kingly Pow'r

While thou may'st sit Spectator from the Tow'r. 420

Why dost thou murm'ring vent thy Threats in vain,

And look for Vengeance from this menial Train?

Not these alone, but they who gave thee Breath,

And e'en thy Sisters with thy speedy Death.

Thy threat'ning Brother labours at the Gate; 425

Nor canst thou here much longer shun thy Fate

So long deserv'd. — Thus spoke th' impassion'd Sire;

The King replies, inflam'd with equal Ire.

Think not, O Traytor, by this weak Pretence

To veil thy Hopes, and triumph o'er our Sense: 430

No Grief cou'd move thee for *Menæceus'* Death

But rather Joy, he thus resign'd his Breath.

Fearing, thy impious Thoughts shou'd be descry'd,

Thou seek'st in Tears the swelling Joy to hide,

Thro' vain Presumption, that if I shou'd fall, 435

Thou, as next Heir, must sway the regal Hall.

v. 413. *And shall our King*]

Et jam tu, si qua tibi vis,  
Si patrii quid Martis habes, illum aspice contra  
Qui vocat. —

Yet hope not, Fortune, adverse as she seems,  
 Will second thee in these ambitious Schemes;  
 E'en now thy wretched Life is in my Hands,  
 But first my Arms, my Arms, ye faithful Bands. 440  
 While we're in Fight, thou, *Creon*, may'st assuage  
 Thy Groans, and take Advantage of our Rage.  
 Yet shou'd the Fortune of the Day be mine  
 Immediate Death, vile Miscreant, shall be thine.  
 Thus spoke the Monarch, and his shining Sword, 445  
 Drawn forth in Anger to the Sheath restor'd.  
 Thus, when excited by a random Wound,  
 The Snake on Spires erected, cleaves the Ground,  
 And, fraught with Ire, from his whole Body draws  
 A Length of Poison to his thirsty Jaws, 450  
 If chance his Foe, unheeded, turns aside,  
 His high wound Wrath is quickly pacified;  
 He drinks the Venom, which he wrought in vain,  
 And his distended Neck subsides again.  
 But when the sad *Jocasta* had receiv'd 455  
 The dire Account, too hastily believ'd,  
 Unmindful of her Sex, and ev'ry Care,  
 She bar'd her bloody Breast, and rent her Hair.

v. 458. *She bar'd her bloody Breast*] The Speech of *Jocasta* opens with great Tenderness, and is preluded by Actions expressive of the highest Misery. The Circumstance in particular of showing that Breast to her Son, which had supported him in his Infancy, is (to use the Words of Mr. *Pope*) extremely moving. It is a silent Kind of Oratory, and prepares the Heart to listen by prepossessing the Eye in Favour of the Speaker. *Priam* and *Hecuba* are represented in much the same Condition, when endeavouring to dissuade their Son *Hector* from a single Combat with *Achilles*, though I must observe, in praise of our Author, that there is more Passion in *Jocasta's* Speech, and the Contrast of Terror and Pity considerably more heightened.

As when *Agave* climb'd the Mountain's Brow,  
 To bring the promis'd Head (her impious Vow.) 460  
 Such rush'd the Queen, distracted in her Mind,  
 And left her Daughters, and her Slaves behind.  
 Despair her Nerves with unknown Vigour strung,  
 And Violence of Sorrow made her young,  
 Meanwhile the Chief his graceful Helmet took, 465  
 And in his Hand two pointed Javelins shook.  
 When in his Mother rushes. At the Sight  
 He and his Train grew Pale with wild Affright.  
 He renders back in haste a proffer'd Dart,  
 While thus she strives to work upon his Heart. 470  
 Say, whence this Rage, and why so soon again  
 The warring Furies quit their nother Reign?  
 Was it, so slight two adverse Hosts to lead,  
 And fight by Proxy on th' ensanguin'd Mead?  
 That nothing but a Duel can appease 475  
 Your mutual Wrath, nor less than Murder please.  
 Where will the Victor have Recourse for Rest,  
 Say, will he court it on this slighted Breast?  
 Thrice happy Spouse in this thy gloomy State!  
 O had these Eyes but shar'd an equal Fate! 480  
 And must I see? — Ah! whither dost thou turn  
 Those Eyes that with revengeful Fury burn?  
 What mean these Symptoms of a tortur'd Breast,  
 Harsh-grinding Teeth, and Murmurs half suppress?  
 Hop'st thou to see thy Mother overcome, 485  
 First thou must try these odious Arms at home.  
 I'll stop thee in the Threshold of the Gate,  
 And, while I can, oppose the fell Debate.  
 First thou shalt pierce, in Fullness of thy Rage,  
 These Breasts, that fed thee in thy tender Age: 490

While hurried on by thee, the furious Horse  
 Spurns my hoar Head, and tramples on my Corse.  
 Why dost thou thus repel me with thy Shield  
 Forbear, and to my just Intreaties yield.  
 No Honors to the Furies have I paid, 495  
 Nor against thee invoc'd infernal Aid.  
 'Tis not stern *Oedipus*, thy vengeful Sire,  
 Thy Bliss, thy Welfare only I desire.  
 I ask thee but to halt awhile, and weigh  
 The Guilt and Dangers of th' intended Fray. 500  
 What tho' thy Brother summons thee to fight,  
 Presuming on imaginary Might?  
 No Friend is near his Fury to restrain:  
 Thee all intreat, thee all intreat in vain.  
 Him to the Fight *Adrastus* may persuade, 505  
 Or should he check, scarce hopes to be obey'd.  
 Wilt thou then leave us here absorb'd in Woe,  
 To vent thy Anger on a Brother Foe?  
 Nor did a Virgin's tender Fears withhold  
 The fair *Antigone*; but nobly bold 510  
 She rush'd amidst the Croud, resolv'd to gain  
 The Wall, whose Height commands the subject Plain.  
 Old *Astor* follows with unequal Pace,  
 Enfeebled, e're he reach'd the destin'd Place.  
 Her Brother she discern'd not, as afar 515  
 She saw him glitter in the Pomp of War,  
 But when she heard him insolently loud  
 Discharge his Darts, and thunder in the Crowd,  
 She screams, and as about to quit the Walls,  
 On *Polynices* thus aloud she calls. 520  
 Awhile thy Arms, and horrid Crest resign,  
 And to yon Tow'r thy roving Eyes confine.

Know'st thou thy Foes? and dost thou thus demand  
 Our lawful Share of the supreme Command?  
 Whate'er may be the Merits of the Cause, 525  
 Such Conduct cannot meet with our Applause.  
 By all the Gods of *Argos* (for our own  
 Dishonour'd and of no Repute are grown)  
 By thy fair Spouse, and all thy Soul holds dear,  
 O calm thy Passion and a Sister hear. 530  
 Of either Host behold a num'rous Train,  
 Permit not these to sue, and sue in vain.  
 This, only this I claim as the Reward  
 Of my suspected Love, and firm Regard.  
 Unbind the martial Terrors of thy Brow, 535  
 Dismiss each Frown, and give me yet to know,  
 That, what, with honest Freedom I impart,  
 Has wrought a just Impression on thy Heart.  
 Fame says, thy Mother's suppliant Groans have won  
*Eteocles*, her more obsequious Son 540  
 But I return repuls'd, who Day and Night  
 Have wept thy Exile, and bemoan'd thy Flight.  
 By me thy haughty Father was appeas'd,  
 E'en the stern *Oedipus*, so rarely pleas'd.  
 Thy Brother stands acquitted of the Crime, 545  
 What though he reign'd beyond th' allotted Time,  
 And broke his Faith; yet he repents at last,  
 And wisely shuns the Censure of the past.

v. 527. *For our own*] This is a very bitter Remonstrance of the Disregard to his native Town, by bringing a foreign Army to besiege it.

v. 534 *Of my suspected Love*] *Antigone* is reported to have confined her Affection to her younger Brother *Polynices*, and even to have admitted him to her Embraces. *Lactantius*.



**BOOK XL STATIUS'S THEBAID. 545**

Still'd by these Words, his Rage began to cease,  
And his tumultuous Soul was hush'd to Peace : 550  
His Grasp relax'd, he gently turns the Reins,  
And sadly silent for a while remains.

Thick-issuing Groans his blunted Anger show,  
And Tears, by Nature only taught to flow.  
But while he hesitates as in a Trance, 555

Astham'd alike to linger or advance,  
The Gates broke down, his Mother thrust aside,  
Freed by the Fury, thus his Rival cried.  
Brother, at length I come, yet much repine,  
The Glory of the Challenge must be thine. 560

Yet trust me, 'twas my Mother who delay'd  
The wish'd for Combate, and withheld my Blade.  
Soon shall this headless State, our native Land,  
Be subject to the Conqueror's Command.

Nor was the Prince more mild in his Replies, 565  
Now, Tyrant, dost thou know thy Faith? (he cries)  
Thou attestest now at length a Brother's Part;  
But come, and prove the Fury of my Dart.  
Such Covenants alone to choose remain,

These are the Laws; that must secure our Reign. 570  
This Answer, stern to view, the Chief return'd;

For his proud Heart with secret Envy burn'd,  
As he descry'd his Brother's num'rous Train,  
That swarm'd around him, and half hid the Plain,  
The purple Trappings, that his Steed adorn, 575  
And studded Helm, by Monarchs only borne.

Though he himself no common Armour bore,  
Nor on his Back a vulgar Tunic wore :

Th' Embroidery his skilful Consort (taught  
Each Art that *Lydian* Damsels practise) wrought. 580

546. STATIUS's THEBAID. BOOK XI.

And now they fall to the dusty Plain,  
 The Furies follow, mingling in the Train.  
 Like trusty Squires, beside the Steeds they stand;  
 Adjust their Trappings with officious Hand,  
 And, while they seem attentive to the Reins,  
 With intermingled Snakes augment their Manes,  
 Two Brothers meet in Fight, alike in Face,  
 Sprung from one Womb, tho' not from one Embrace.  
 Now cease the Signals of the War around,  
 Nor the hoarse Horns, nor shriller Trumpets sound 590  
 When *Pluto* thunder'd from his gloomy Seat,  
 The conscious Earth thrice shook beneath their Feet.  
*Mars* lash'd his Steeds, and all the Pow'rs of War  
 Retire from Scenes they cannot but abhor.  
*Bellona* quench'd in Haste her flaming Brand, 595  
 And laurell'd Valour quits the guilty Land.  
 The Sister Furies blush at their own Deeds;  
 While to the Walls the wretched Vulgar speeds,  
 A just Aversion mixt with Pity show,  
 And rain their Sorrows on the Crowd below. 600  
 Here hoary Sires, a venerable Throng,  
 Complain to Heav'n and cry, 'we've liv'd too long;

v. 581. *And now they fall to the*] It is impossible but the whole Attention of the Reader must be awaken'd at this Crisis. Nothing could be better contriv'd to prepossess him with a just Detestation of this impious and unnatural Combat than the Fiction that includes it. The Images have something in them wonderfully grand and magnificent. We hear *Pluto* thundering, feel the Earth shaking under us, and see *Mars*, *Pallas* and the subaltern Deities of War retiring with the utmost Precipitation from so horrid a spectacle. Even the Furies themselves, who were accessory to the Duel, when it is upon the Point of being fought, are represented as shock'd, abash'd and astonish'd. The Circumstance of the Mothers driving away their Children has not more of Art, than Nature in its Invention.

There sadder Matrons their bare Breasts display,  
 And kindly drive their eager Sons away.  
 Astonish'd at the Deed, infernal *Jove* 605  
 Opens each Passage to the Realms above.  
 The Phantoms, freed on ev'ry Mountain's Brow.  
 Recline, Spectators of their Country's Woe;  
 Around a Mist of *Stygian* Gloom they cast,  
 Glad, that their greatest Crimes are now surpast. 610  
 Soon as *Adrastus* was inform'd by Fame,  
 The wrathful Combatants, unaw'd by Shame,  
 Had issued forth to close the bloody Scene,  
 He urg'd his Steeds, and kindly rush'd between.  
 Much was he reverenc'd for Rank and Age, 615  
 But what cou'd these avail to calm their Rage?  
 When Nature's Ties experienc'd no Regard,  
 Yet thus he strives their Conflict to retard.  
 Shall then the *Greek* and *Tyrian* Armies too  
 Your Crime, as yet unmatch'd, unacted, view? 620  
 Can there be Pow'rs above, and Laws divine?  
 But come, your Wrath at my Request resign.  
 I ask thee, Monarch! tho' we act as Foes,  
 Yet know, our Strife from our Relation rose.  
 Of thee a Son's Obedience I demand; 625  
 Yet if he thus desire supreme Command,  
 I lay aside the Garb of sov'reign Sway,  
*Argos* and *Lerna* shall your Laws obey.  
 He spake: their stubborn Purpose they retain,  
 Nor his sage Counsels more their will restrain, 630  
 Than the Sea listens to the Sailor's Cry,  
 When the Surge bellows, and the Storm runs high.  
 When he perceiv'd his mild Intreaties vain,  
 And the two Knights encount'ring on the Plain,

While each, impatient, anxious first to wound, 635  
 Inserts his Dart, and whirls the Sling around,  
 He lash'd *Arion* (who, his Silence broke,  
 The stern Decrees of Fate, portentous, spoke)  
 Yields all the Reigns, and flying swift as Wind,  
 His Camp, his Son, and Army leaves behind. 640  
 Not paler look'd the Ruler of the Ghosts,  
 When he compar'd his own *Tartarian* Coasts

v. 638. *The stern Decrees*] The Impropriety of this Fiction is not so flagrant as some may apprehend it, and our Author has the Sanction of Fable and History to justify his using it. *Livy* tells us of two Oxen, who forewarn'd the City of *Rome* in these Words, *Roma cave tibi*: and *Pliny* observes, that these Animals were remarkable for Vaticination. Est frequens in prodigiis priscorum, bovem esse locutum. *Homer* introduces the Horses of *Achilles* prophesying their Master's Death: and if he has done it without Censure from the Critics, why may not *Statius* be allowed the same Liberty after him?

v. 641. *Not paler look'd*] The following Verses of *Homer* with Mr. *Pope's* Note on them will clear up the Mystery of this Simile if there be any.

Τρεῖς γάρ τ' ἐν Κρόνῳ κρήνι ἀδελφοὶ, ὅς τίνα Πάρι,  
 Ζεὺς κ' ἰγὼν, τρίτατος δ' Αἰδὴς αἰετοῖσιν ἀνέσταν,  
 Τριχῶν δ' ὅντα πάντα διδάσκει, ἕκαστος δ' ἔμμορσι πρῆνς·  
 Ἦτοι ἰγὼν ἔλαχεν πολὺν ἄλκιον καὶ καίμην αἰὲς  
 Παλλὰδ' ἄντι, Αἰδὴς δ' ἔλαχεν ἱερὸν ἡρώεσσι·  
 Ζεὺς δ' ἔλαχ' ἑσπερίον ἑρὸν καὶ αἰθήρη κ' ἐφίλησεν·  
 Γαῖα δ' ἔτι ζωνὴ πάντων κ' ἡμετέρησιν ἀνέμω.

*Homer's Iliad. B. 15.*

Some have thought the *Platonic* Philosophers drew from hence the Notion of their Triad (which the Christian *Platonists* since imagine to be an obscure Hint of the sacred Trinity.) The Trias of *Plato* is well known, τὸ αὐτὸ οἱ τῶν ὁμοειργῶν, ἢ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ψυχῶν. In *Gorgias* he tells us, τὸν Ὀρμῶν (autorem sc. fuisse) τῆς τῶν ὁμοειργῶν τριᾶδος ὑπόθεσις. See *Proclus* in *Plat. Theol. Lib. 1. c. 5. Lucian, Philopatr. Aristotele de celo, L. 1. c. 1.* speaking of the Ternarian Number from *Pythagoras*, has these Words, Τὰ τριῶν καὶ τὸ τρις πύλη. καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἀριστείας τῶν διῶν χρώμεθα τὸ ἀσφῶδες τῶν καὶ περὶ φασὶν καὶ οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὰ πάντα τὰς τρεῖς ἀριστείας. Τελύτη γὰρ καὶ μέσση καὶ ἀρχὴ τοῦ ἀριθμοῦ ἔχει τὸ τρεῖς

With the more blissful Scenes of Heav'n above,  
 By fav'ring Lot assign'd to happier *Jove*.  
 Nor Fortune was indulgent to the Fray, 645  
 But by a blameless Error of the Way  
 She kept their rushing Coursers long apart,  
 And kindly turn'd aside each guiltless Dart.  
 At length the Chiefs, impatient for the Fight,  
 With Spurs and loosen'd Reins their Steeds excite, 651  
 While direful Omens from the Gods above  
 Both Armies to renew the Battle move.  
 Through either Camp a busy Murmur rolls,]  
 And glorious Discord fires their inmost Souls.  
 Oft Passion urges them to rush between, 655  
 And intercept with Arms the bloody Scene,  
 But Piety, who view'd with equal Scorn  
 The Gods, and those of mortal Mothers born,  
 Sate in a distant Part of Heav'n, alone,  
 Nor habited, as she was whilom known. 660  
 A gloomy discontented Look she wore,  
 The Snow-white Fillet from her Tresses tore,  
 And like a Mother or a Sister show'd  
 Her tender Heart in Tears, that freely flow'd.  
 The guilty Fates and *Saturn's* Son she blam'd, 665  
 And with a Voice that pierc'd the Skies, exclaim'd,

ταῦτα δὲ τῶν τῆς Τριῶδος. From which Passage *Trapezuntius* endeavour'd very seriously to prove that *Aristotle* had a perfect Knowledge of the Trinity. *Duport* (who furnish'd me with this Note, and who seems to be sensible of the Folly of *Trapezuntius*) nevertheless in his *Gnomologia Homericæ* has placed opposite to this Verse that of *St. John*: There are three, who give Testimony in Heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I think this the strongest Instance I ever met with of the Manner of thinking of such Men, whose too much Learning has made them mad.

She soon wou'd quit the starry Realms of *Jove*  
 And seek a Mansion in the *Stygian* Grove.  
 Why was I form'd, O Author of my Birth,  
 To sway the Sons of Heav'n, and Sons of Earth? 570  
 Suspended are my Honours, lost my Fame,  
 And Piety is nothing but a Name.  
 O Madness, fatal Madness of Mankind,  
 And Arts, by rash *Prometheus* ill design'd.  
 Far better had the World continu'd void, 675  
 And the whole Species been at once destroy'd.  
 Try we howe'er their Fury to restrain,  
 Some Praise is due, shou'd we but try in vain.  
 She spoke, and watching for a fav'ring Time,  
 With swift Descent forsook th' ærial Clime. 680  
 Sad as she seem'd, a snowy Trail of Light  
 Pursu'd her Steps, and mark'd her rapid Flight.  
 Scarce had she landed, when, their Wrath suppress'd,  
 The Love of Peace prevails in ev'ry Breast.  
 Adown their Cheeks the Tears in silence steal 685  
 And the two Foes a transient Horror feel.  
 Fictitious Arms, and Male-Attire she wears,  
 And thus aloud her high Behests declares.  
 Hither, whoe'er fraternal Friendship knows,  
 If yet we may restrain these Brother Foes. 690  
 Then (for I ween Heav'n pitied) from each Hand  
 The Weapons fell, and fixt the Coursers stand.  
 E'en Fortune seem'd to spin a short Delay,  
 And rush between to close the dreadful Fray;  
 But stern *Erinnys* pierc'd the thin Disguise, 695  
 And swift as Lightning to the Goddess flies.  
 What urg'd thee, who to Peace art more inclin'd,  
 To mingle in the Wars of Human-kind?

Retire, advis'd, and give the Vengeance Way;  
 Our's is the Field, and Fortune of the Day. 700  
 Why was thou wanting, when a just Pretence  
 Was offer'd thee to war in their Defence?  
 When *Bacchus* bath'd his Arms in kindred Blood,  
 And *Mars's* Serpent drank the guilty Flood;  
 When the *Sphinx* fell, and *Cadmus* sow'd the Plain; 705  
 When *Laius* by his Son was rashly slain,  
 Or, guided by our Torch, *Jocasta* press'd  
 The Bed of Incest. — Thus the Fiend address'd  
 The bashful Pow'r, pursu'd her as she fled  
 With Snakes, and wav'd her Torch around her Head.  
 The Goddess draws the Veil before her Eyes, 711  
 And for Redress to *Jove* all-potent flies.  
 Soon as she left the Heroes, by Degrees  
 Their Ire returns, and nought but Arms can please.  
 The perjurd Monarch first his Javelin flings; 715  
 Full on the middle Orb the Weapon rings,  
 Nor pierc'd the Gold, but bounding from the Shield  
 Exhausts its blunted Fury on the Field.  
 The Prince advances next, in Act to throw,  
 But first bespeaks the Pow'rs that rule below 720  
 Ye Gods, of whom with more than hop'd Success  
 The Son of *Laius* whilom ask'd Redress,

v. 721. *And for Redress*] *Barthius* with more than usual Propriety observes, that our Author like the great *Homer* has nodded over this Passage. How (says he) is it probable, that *Piety* should have recourse to *Jupiter* for Redress, on whom with all the other Deities she had thrown out the most bitter Invektives, and threatened, as he informs us,

She soon would quit the starry Realms of *Jove*,  
 And seek a Mansion in the *Stygian* Grove.

To this less impious Pray'r your Ears incline,  
 And realize the Mischief I design.  
 Nor think, my Rival slain, I wish to live, 725  
 This guilty Spear shall Absolution give.  
 Give me but Breath to tell him that I reign,  
 And by surviving, double all his Pain.  
 The rapid Spear, with forceful Vigour cast,  
 Between the Rider's Thigh and Courser past. 730  
 A double Death the vengeful Marksman meant,  
 But the wise Chief his Knee alertly bent;  
 Nor, innocent of Blood, the Lance descends,  
 But the short Ribs with glancing Fury rends.  
 The Steed wheels round, impatient of the Reins, 735  
 And draws a bloody Circle on the Plains.  
 The Prince, presuming it his Rival's Wound,  
 (He too believes it) with a furious Bound  
 Springs forward, and advancing o'er the Mead,  
 Pours all his Fury on the wounded Steed. 740  
 Reins mix'd with Reins, and Hand inlock'd in Hand,  
 At once the falling Coursers press the Strand.  
 As Ships, entangled by the Wind, contend,  
 Their Oars exchange, their mingled Rudders rend,

v. 729. *Give me but Breath*] I am inclined to believe this was one of those Passages, that induced Mr. *Pope* to remark on our Author's Heroes, that an Air of Impetuosity runs through them all? the same horrid and savage Courage appears in *Capaneus*, *Tydeus*, *Hippomedon*, &c. They have a Parity of Character which makes them seem Brothers of one Family — *Lucan* puts a Wish in *Cæsar's* Mouth, which is not very dissimilar.

————— Mihi funere nullo  
 Est opus, O Superis lacerum retinete cadaver  
 Fluctibus in mediis; desint mihi busta, Rogusque  
 Dum metuar semper, terræque expecter ab omni. Ph. L. 5.



BOOK XI. STATIUS's THEBAID. 553

And, while they struggle in the gloomy Storm 745  
 To break the Knot, a stricter Union form;  
 Then, all the Pilot's Art in vain applied,  
 Together in a Depth of Sea subside.  
 Such was the Scene of Conflict. Art they scorn,  
 By mutual Anger on each other borne. 750  
 The Sparks, that issue from each other's Eyes,  
 Kindle their Ire, and bid their Fury rise:  
 Entwin'd in one their Hands and Swords were seen,  
 So close, no Interval was left between,  
 But mutual Murmurs, as in stern Embrace 755  
 They mix, supply the Horn, and Trumpet's Place.  
 As when, with Anger stung and jealous Rage,  
 Two Boars, the Terror of the Wood, engage,  
 They gnash their Iv'ry Tusks, their Bristles rise,  
 And Light'ning flashes from their glaring Eyes: 760  
 While the pale Hunter from some Mountain's Height  
 Stills the shrill-baying Hounds and views the Fight.  
 Thus fought the Chiefs; nor tho' they yet had found  
 Their Strength exhausted by a mortal Wound,  
 Yet flow'd the Blood, the Mischief was begun, 765  
 Nor ought, the Fiends could wish, remain'd, undone.  
 They grieve, the Wrath of Man can yet do more,  
 And praise the strict Observance of their Lore

v. 759. *As when*] The Poet has here given us an Image of the two Combatants with great Precision and Exactness. If he had compared them to a Boar and a Lion fighting, he had not taken in the Circumstance of Relation between the two Heroes, which constitutes the Essence of the Comparison. The Hunter and his Dogs very properly correspond with the Soldiery, who were Spectators of the Duel. In short (as Mr. *Pope* observes of a Simile in *Homer*) there is no Circumstance of their present Condition that is not to be found in the Comparison, and no particular in the Comparison that does not resemble the Action of the Heroes.

Each aims a deadly Blow, and thirsts for Blood,  
 Nor sees his own, that forms a purple Flood, 770  
 Full on his Foe th' impetuous Exile flies,  
 Exhorts his Hand, and ev'ry Nerve applies:  
 Much he presumes upon his righteous Cause,  
 And juster Anger, then his Falchion draws,  
 And in his Brother's Groin the Steel inserts, 775  
 Where his ill-guarding Mail the Cincture girts.  
 The King, alarm'd as he began to feel  
 The cold Invasion of the griding Steel,  
 Retires beneath his Target. He pursues,  
 As the wide Wound, and issuing Gore he views, 780  
 And with a Voice that shook the Fields around,  
 Insults him thus, as still he quits his Ground.  
 Brother, why this Retreat? — O transient Sleep  
 And Vigils, which th' ambitious ever keep!  
 Behold these Limbs, by Want and Exile steel'd; 785  
 And learn to bear the Hardships of the Field:  
 Nor trust the Fortune, that bestows a Throne,  
 And rashly call, what she but lends, thy own.  
 The King as yet his vital Breath retain'd,  
 And ebbing still the Stream of Life remain'd. 790  
 Spontaneously supine he press'd the Ground,  
 And meditates in Death a fraudulent Wound.  
 His Brother, hoping now the Day his own,  
 Extends his Hands to Heav'n, and in a Tone  
 That shook *Citharon*, ecchoing thro' the Skies, 795  
 Thus o'er his prostrate Foe, insulting, cries,  
 'Tis well. -- The Gods have heard. -- He pants for Breath,  
 And his Eyes darken with the Shades of Death,  
 Let some one bring the Crown, and Robe of State.  
 While yet he sees, and struggles with his Fate 800

BOOK XI. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 555

He paus'd, inspir'd by some unfriendly Pow'r,  
 To strip his Rival in his dying Hour,  
 As if his ill-earn'd Spoils, in Triumph borne,  
 Would raise his Glory, and the Fanes adorn.  
 The Monarch, who, tho' feigning to expire 805  
 Surviv'd to execute his vengeful Ire,  
 When he perceiv'd the Posture of his Foe  
 (His Bosom obvious to a mortal Blow)  
 Unseen his Falchion raises, and supplies  
 With Rage the Strength, that ebbing Life denies, 810  
 Then in his unsuspecting Brother's Heart  
 With joyful Anger sheaths the steely Part.  
 The Prince rejoins. — Then art thou yet alive,  
 And does thy Thirst of Vengeance still survive?  
 Base Wretch! thy Perfidy can never gain 815  
 A blissful Mansion in th' *Elysian* Plain.  
 Hence to the Shades, there I'll renew my Claim  
 Before the *Cretan*, who is said by Fame  
 To shake the *Gnosſian* Urn, and Woes prepare  
 For perjur'd Kings, and all who falsely swear. 820  
 This said, he sunk beneath the deathful Blow,  
 And with the Weight of Arms o'erwhelm'd his Foe.  
 Go, cruel Shades, the Pains of Hell exhaust,  
 Mourn, all ye Fiends, the Palm of Guilt is lost.  
 Henceforward learn the Sons of Earth to spare, 825  
 Nor punish Deeds, which ill with these compare.  
 Deeds, that are yet unmatched in any Clime,  
 Nor known in all the spacious Walks of Time.  
 Let dark Oblivion veil the guilty Fight,  
 And Kings alone th' enormous Crime recite. 830

When

When *Oedipus* had heard, the Brothers fell  
 By mutual Wounds, his subterraneous Cell  
 He quits in Haste, and drags to Scenes of Strife  
 His wretched Load of unillumin'd Life.  
 Inver'trate Filth and clotted Gore disspread, 835  
 The silver Honors of his aged Head.  
 Dire to the View his hollow Cheeks arise,  
 And frightful yawn the Ruins of his Eyes.  
 His Right-Hand on the Staff was seen to rest.  
 His left the Shoulder of his Daughter prest. 840  
 Such here on Earth would hoary Charon seem,  
 Should he forsake awhile the *Stygian* Stream;  
 The Stars wou'd blush to view his hideous Mein,  
 And *Phabus* sicken at his Form obscene.  
 Nor he himself would long avail to bear 845  
 The Change of Climate, and a foreign Air,  
 While in his Absence swells the living Freight,  
 And Ages on the Banks his Coming wait,  
 Soon as they reach'd the Field, aloud he cries,  
 O thou, on whom alone my Age relies, 850  
 Direct me to my Sons, and let me share  
 The fun'ral Honours, which their Friends prepare.

v. 831. *When Oedipus*] Of all the Pictures, which the Pencil of Poetry ever presented to the Eye of the Mind, none abounds in more masterly Strokes and Touches than this before us. *Oedipus* appears here in all the Pomp of Wretchedness (if, I may use that Expression) and can only be equalled by *Shakspeare's* King *Lear*.

v. 845. *Nor he*] Our Author has taken the Hint of this Hypothesis from *Ovid's* *Metamorphosis*.

Est via declivis, per quam Tyrinthius Heros  
 Restantem, contraque diem, radiosque micantes  
 Obliquantem oculos, nexis adamante catenis  
 Cerberon attraxit. ————— Lib. 8th.

The Virgin, ignorant of his Command,  
 Replies in Groans, and lingers on the Strand;  
 While Chariots, Arms, and Warriors heap the Way,  
 Their Feet entangle, and their Progress stay. 856  
 Scarce can his aged Legs the Sire sustain;  
 And his Conductress labours oft in vain.  
 Soon as her Shrieks proclaim'd the fatal Place,  
 He mix'd his Limbs with theirs in cold Embrace. 860  
 Speechless he lies, and murmurs o'er each Wound,  
 Nor for a while his Words a Passage found.  
 But while their Mouths beneath their Helms he seeks,  
 His Sighs give Way, and all the Father speaks.  
 Does then Affection bear again its Part 865  
 In decent Grief, and can this stubborn Heart,  
 By Wrongs inur'd, and by Distresses steel'd,  
 To conqu'ring Nature's late Impressions yield.  
 Else why these Tears, that long had ceas'd to flow,  
 And Groans, that more than vulgar Sorrow show? 870  
 Accept then, what, as Sons, you rightly claim,  
 (For well your Actions justify the Name)  
 Fain would I speak, but know not which demands  
 The Preference by Birth: — then say whose Hands  
 I grasp. — How shall I give your Shades their Due, 875  
 And with what Pomp your Obsequies pursue?  
 O that my Eyes could be restor'd again,  
 And the lost Power of renewing Pain!  
 To Heav'n alas too just my Cause appear'd,  
 And too successfully my Pray'rs were heard 880  
 What God was near me (when by Passion sway'd,  
 My Vows to *Pluto*, and the Fiends I paid)  
 And faithfully convey'd the Curse to Fate?  
 Charge not on me, my Sons, the dire Debate,

But on my Parents, Throne, infernal Foes, 885  
 And injur'd Eyes, sole Authors of your Woes.  
 My guiltless Guide, and *Pluto* loth to spare,  
 I call to vouch the sacred Truth I swear.  
 Thus worthily may I resign my Breath,  
 Nor *Laius* shun me in the Realms of Death. 890  
 Alas! what Bonds, what Wounds are these I feel!  
 O loose your Hands, nor longer grasp the Steel.  
 No longer let these hostile Folds be seen;  
 And now at least admit your Sire between.  
 Thus wail'd the wretched King, and sick of Life 895  
 In secret sought the Instrument of Strife:  
 But she, suspicious of his rash Designs,  
 Conceal'd it, whilst in Rage he thus rejoins:  
 Ye vengeful Furies! can no Swords be found?  
 Was all the Weapon buried in the Wound? 900  
 His Comrade, raising him, her Grief suppress;  
 And much rejoic'd, that Pity touch'd his Breast.  
 Meanwhile, impatient of the vital Light,  
 And, dreading to survive the threaten'd Fight,  
 The Queen the Sword of hapless *Laius* sought, 905  
 (A fatal Spoil, with future Mischiefs fraught.)  
 And, much complaining of the Pow'rs above,  
 Her furious Son, and her incestuous Love,  
 Attempts to pierce her Breast. Her fault'ring Hand  
 Long struggled to infix the weighty Brand, 910  
 At length with Toil her aged Veins she tore,  
 And purg'd the Bed of Guilt with issuing Gore.  
 The fair *Ismene* to her Rescue flew,  
 Her snowy Arms around her Mother threw.  
 To dry the Wound her ev'ry Care applied, 915  
 And rent her Tresses, sorrowing at her Side,

Such erst in *Marathon's* impervious Wood  
*Erigone* beside her Father stood,  
 When, hast'ning to discharge her pious Vows,  
 She loos'd the Knot, and cull'd the strongest Boughs  
 But Fortune, who with Joy malign survey'd 921  
 The Hopes of either Rival frustrate made,  
 Transfers the Sceptre thence with envious Hand,  
 And gives to *Creon* the supreme Command.  
 Alas! how wretched was the Term of Fight! 925  
 Another rules, while they dispute their Right.  
 Him all invite with one approving Voice,  
 And slain *Menæceus* justifies their Choice.  
 At length he mounts the long-contested Throne  
 Of *Thebes*, to Kings of late so fatal grown. 930  
 O flatt'ring Empire, and deluding Love  
 Of Pow'r! shall such Examples fruitless prove?  
 See, how he frowns upon his menial Train,  
 And waves the bloody Ensign of his Reign!  
 What more? should Fortune all her Store exhaust:  
 Behold the Father in the Monarch lost! 936  
 He whilom mourn'd his Son's untimely Death;  
 Now glories, that he thus resign'd his Breath.  
 Scarce had he reign'd, the Tyrant of a Day,  
 When, as a Sample of his future Sway, 940

\* 917. *Such erst in Marathon's*] *Erigone* was the Daughter of *Icarus*; and being directed by her Dog to the Place, where her Father was slain, through Excess of Grief hung herself upon a neighbouring Tree: but the Branch breaking down with her Weight, she was said to seek stronger Boughs. At length she accomplished her Purpose, and for her Piety was translated into Heaven, and became the Constellation, we call *Virgo*.

\* 939. *Scarce had he reign'd*] *Seneca* in his *Thyestes*, says: *Ue nemo doceat fraudis, scelerumque viam, Regnum docebit.* A Truth which the History of every Age and Country will evince to us.

The last funereal Honours he denies  
 To the slain *Greeks*, expos'd to foreign Skies;  
 And, ever mindful of an Insult past,  
 Forbids their wand'ring Shades to rest at last.  
 Then meeting, as he pass'd th' *Ogygian Gate*, 945  
 The Son of *Laius*, Object of his Hate,  
 At first his Age and Title he rever'd,  
 And for awhile his eyeless Rival fear'd:  
 But soon the King returns: and inly stung,  
 He cries with all the Virulence of Tongue. 950  
 Avaunt, fell Omen to the Victors, hence,  
 Nor longer by Delays my Wrath incense;  
 Hence with thy Furies, while thy Safety calls;  
 And let thy Absence purify our Walls.  
 Thy Wishes granted, and thy Children slain, 955  
 What Hopes, or impious Vows can now remain?  
 At this Reproach, as some terrific Sight,  
 His meager Cheeks stood trembling with Affright.  
 Old Age awhile recedes; his Hand resigns  
 The Staff, nor on his Guide he now reclines: 960  
 But, trusting to his Rage, with equal Pride,  
 And Bitterness of Words he thus replied.  
 What tho' the Slain no more thy Thoughts engage,  
 And thou hast Leisure here to vent thy Rage,

*Μίαν ἄλῃον καὶ περὶ καὶ ὀδυνην* (says *Pindar*) or in other Words.  
 Good Fortune is less tolerable than bad. That we are the more  
 liable to fall into Vices, when we have the Means of gratifying  
 them, is indisputably true: how little then ought those to repine,  
 whom Providence has placed in a lowly Situation of Life secure  
 from many Temptations, to which the great and the rich are ex-  
 posed: or ought we not rather to look upon it as the most dis-  
 tinguishing Mark of Favour, which could possibly be conferred upon  
 us.



Yet know, the Crown, which late adorn'd my Head,  
Affords thee no Pretence to wrong the dead, 966  
And trample on the Ruins of those Kings,  
From whose Misfortunes thy short Glory springs.

Go on, and merit thus the regal Sway.  
But why this Caution, and this long Delay? 970

Give Tyranny at once the Length of Reins,  
And boldly act, whate'er thy Will ordains.  
Would'st thou with Exile punish an Offence,  
Know, Exile argues too much Diffidence  
Of thy own Pow'r, then check thy Rage no more, 975

But auspicate thy Reign with human Gore.  
Expect not, I shall deprecate the Stroke,  
And on my Knees thy Clemency invoke.

Long since in me the Source of Fear is dry;  
And Death with all its Horrors I defy. 980

Is Banishment decreed? — the World I left,  
Of all its Joys spontaneously bereft;  
And, long impatient of the Scenes of Light,  
Forc'd from their Orbs the bleeding Balls of Sight.  
What equal Punishment canst thou prepare? 985

I fly my Country, and its tainted Air.  
It moves me not, in what so distant Clime  
I pass the wretched Remnant of my Time.  
No Land, I ween, will to my Pray'rs deny  
The little Spot, that I shall occupy. 990

Yet *Thebes* most pleases, as it gave me Birth,  
And lodges all my Soul holds dear on Earth.

Th' *Aonian* Sceptre long may'st thou possess,  
And rule the *Thebans* with the same Success,

As *Cadmus*, I, and *Laius* rul'd before: 995  
Nor Fortune's Sunshine beam upon thee more.

May Sons and Loves like mine thy Woes enhance,  
 Nor Virtue guard thee from the Strokes of Chance.  
 Much may'st thou love the Life, thou'rt doom'd to  
 loose,

And sue for Pardon, which thy Foes refuse. 1000  
 Suffice these Curses to deform thy Reign. —

Then lead me, Daughter, from his curst Domain:  
 But why should'st thou partake paternal Woe?  
 Our potent Monarch will a Guide bestow.

The Princess, fearing to be left behind, 1005  
 Revers'd his Pray'rs, and cries, on Earth reclin'd.  
 By this thy Kingdom, and the sacred Ghost  
 Of brave *Menæceus*, our Support and Boast,

v. 997. *May Sons*] Perverse Children are not reckoned the greatest Evil of Life by our Poet only: King *Lear*, inflaming Nature against his Daughter *Gonerill*, says.

————— If she must teem,  
 Create her Child of Spleen, that it may live,  
 And be a thwart, disnatur'd Torment to her;  
 Let it stamp Wrinkles on her Brow of Youth,  
 With cadent Tears fret Channels in her Cheeks,  
 Turn all her Mother's Pains and Benefits  
 To Laughter and Contempt; that she may feel,  
 How sharper than a Serpent's Tooth it is,  
 To have a thankless Child.

Act 1. Scene 15.

v. 1007. *By this Kingdom*] *Oedipus* having exasperated *Creon* by his spirited, though insolent Reply, the Princess *Antigone* takes upon her to calm his Anger: her Oration is therefore framed with an opposite Air to all which has been hitherto said, sedate and inoffensive. She begins with an Apology for her Father's Disrespect, tells him, that the greatest Favour he could confer, would be to sentence him to Death, sets her good Wishes in Opposition to his Imprecations, reminds him of his Enemy's former Rank and Dignity, but present Inability to injure him, and concludes with evincing the ill Policy of banishing him. In short this Specimen suffices to shew *Antigone's* good Sense, and the Power of female Oratory in mollifying the almost Implacable Hatred of *Creon* to her Father.

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Forgive, if, heated in his own Defence,  
 His Answers sounds like Pride and Insolence. 1010  
 From long Complaints arose this haughty Stile;  
 Nor thee alone he glories to revile:  
 But e'en the Gods; and I, who ne'er offend,  
 Oft prove the Rancour, which he cannot mend.  
 To quit this hated Life is all his Aim, 1015  
 And fatal Liberty his only Claim:  
 For this he spends in Obloquies his Breath,  
 And hopes by Scandal to procure his Death.  
 But may the Pow'rs of Heav'n direct thy Sway;  
 And with fresh Gifts distinguish ev'ry Day. 1020  
 Such Impotence resent not, but despise;  
 And keep my Father's Fate before thine Eyes.  
 In Gold and regal Purple once he shone,  
 And, girt with Arms, sublimely fill'd the Throne,  
 From whence he gave to all impartial Laws, 1025  
 With Patience heard, with Justice clos'd the Cause.  
 Alas! of all his once-unnumber'd Trains  
 A single Guide, and Comrade now remains.  
 Can he thy Weal oppose? and wilt thou rage  
 Against an Enemy, disarm'd by Age; 1030  
 Must he retire, because he loudly groans,  
 And grates thy Ears with inauspicious Moans?

v. 1023. *In Gold &c.*] *Barthius* observes, that this Passage is a Contradiction of what the Poet says in the first Book, Verse 191.

Yet then no Gates of Iv'ry did unfold  
 The Palace, &c.

Notwithstanding this, I could have defended this Oversight with some seemingly ingenious Conjectures, after the Example of those Commentators, who never fail their Author at a Pinch; but as I have no Intention of introducing the Thebaid upon the Public, as a perfect Poem, I shall most willingly subscribe to *Barthius* his Opinion, that the Passage before us is highly exceptionable.

Resign thy Fears : at Distance from the Court  
 Hence shall he mourn, nor interrupt thy Sport.  
 I'll break his Spirit, urge him to retreat 1035  
 And close confine him to his gloomy Seat.  
 But should he wander, exil'd and distrest,  
 What City would admit him as a Guest?  
 Woud'st thou, to polish'd *Argos* he should go,  
 Crawl to *Mycenæ* in the Garb of Woe, 1040  
 And, crouching at their vanquish'd Monarch's Gate,  
 The Rout and Slaughter of our Host relate?  
 Why should he thus expose the Nation's Crimes,  
 And open all the Sorrows of the Times?  
 Conceal, whate'er we suffer : at thy Hand 1045  
 No mighty Favours, *Creon*, we demand.  
 Pity his Sorrows, and revere his Age,  
 Nor wrong the Dead in Fullness of thy Rage :  
 The slaughter'd *Thebans* may enjoy at least  
 Funereal Rites. — The prostrate Princess ceas'd : 1050  
 Her Sire withdraws her, and with Threats disdains  
 The Grant of Life, which scarcely she obtains.  
 The Lion thus, who green in Years, had sway'd  
 The Forests round, by ev'ry Beast obey'd,  
 Beneath some arching Rock in Peace extends 1055  
 His listless Bulk ; and tho' no Strength defends  
 His Age from Insults, yet secure he lies ;  
 His venerable Form Access denies :

v. 1053. *The Lion thus*] This Comparison is as just as Language  
 can make it. I cannot find, that *Statius* is indebted for it to any  
 of his poetical Predecessors. The *Non adeunda Senectus* is a Beauty  
 of Diction I could not preserve in my Translation, nor indeed  
 will the *English* Idiom admit of it.

But if a kindred Voice pervade his Ears,  
 Reflecting on himself, his Limbs he rears, 1060  
 And wishing much his Youth restor'd again,  
 With Envy hears the Monarchs of the Plain.  
 At length Compassion touch'd the Tyrant's Breast;  
 Yet he but grants a Part of her Request,  
 And cries. — Not distant from his native Coasts, 1065  
 Of whose Delights so much he vainly boasts,  
 Shall he be banish'd, so he cease to roam,  
 And leave inviolate each holy Dome.  
 Let him possess his own *Cithæron's* Brow,  
 The Wood contiguous, and the Fields below, 1070  
 O'er which the Shades of Heroes, slain in Fight,  
 Are seen to flit, and shun the loathsome Light,  
 This said, his Course th' Usurper homeward bent,  
 Nor durst the Croud withhold their feign'd Assent.  
 Meanwhile the routed *Greeks* by Stealth retire, 1075  
 And leave their Camp expos'd to hostile Fire.  
 To none their Ensigns, and their Chiefs remain;  
 But silent, and dispers'd they quit the Plain:  
 And to a glorious Death, and martial Fame  
 Prefer a safe Return, and living Shame. 1080  
 Night favours their Design, Assistance yields,  
 And in a Cloud the flying Warriors shields.



**T H E**

**THEBAID OF STATIUS.**

**BOOK THE TWELFTH.**

# THE ARGUMENT.

**T**HE Thebans, after some Doubts concerning the Reality of the Enemy's Flight, repair to the Field of Battle, and bury their Dead. Creon discharges his Son's Obsequies with great Solemnity, and laments over him in a very pathetic Manner: he then forbids his Subjects to burn the Greeks. In the mean time the Wives of the six Captains slain in the Siege march in Procession to Theseus, King of Athens to solicit his Assistance in procuring the dead Bodies. Argia leaves them, goes to Thebes, accompanied only by Menætes, and burns the Body of Polynices on Eteocles's Pile... She there meets with Antigone, who assists her. They are taken, and brought before Creon, who sentences them both to Death. By the Interposition of Pallas the Argive Ladies meet with a favourable Reception from Theseus, who sends a Herald to Creon, and orders him to procure funeral Rites for the Greeks, or declare War against him. Upon the Tyrant's obstinate Refusal the Athenians march to Thebes, which upon the Death of Creon surrenders to Theseus, and entertains him in a hospitable Manner. The Princesses, having obtain'd the Bodies, discharge their funeral Rites in a very sumptuous Manner, a particular Description of which the Poet waves, and concludes the work with an Address to his Poem.



## THE

## THEBAID OF STATIUS.

## BOOK THE TWELFTH.

**T**WAS now the Time, that on the Vault serene  
 Of Heav'n a smaller Groupe of Stars was seen,  
 And *Phæbe* glimmer'd with diminish'd Horn;  
 When fair *Aurora*, Harbinger of Morn,  
 Disperses afar the trembling Shades of Night, 6  
 And resalutes the World with orient Light.  
 Now thro' the desert Town the *Thebans* stray,  
 And mourn the tardy progress of the Day,  
 Tho', since the Conflict with their *Argive* Foes,  
 Now first they taste the Sweets of soft Repose: 10

The Propriety of adding this last Book depends entirely on the Kind of Poem, which the Critics determine this to be. If they settle it to be an Heroic or Historical Poem only, they grant of Consequence the Necessity of adding it in order to render the Poem compleat: but if it is an Epic Poem, it should have ended at the Death of the two Brothers, according to the *Aristotelian* and *Bossuvian* System. But after all I cannot see any great Impropriety in superadding to the grand Catastrophe, if the Excrease grows naturally out of the Subject, and is equally well executed with the former, as I think no one will deny of this before us. I shall conclude this Note with observing, that *Virgil* is the only Writer, who has strictly adher'd to this Form.

Nor yet the fears of hostile Vengeance cease :  
 Sleep hovers round the Bed of sickly Peace ;  
 Nor rests. — They scarcely dare to quit the Gate,  
 And pass the Trench : the Mem'ry of their Fate,  
 And Horrors of the late-embattel'd Plain 15  
 Deep in their timid Breasts infix'd remain,  
 As Mariners long absent, when they land  
 Perceive a seeming Motion in the Strand ;  
 Thus at each Noise, the Troops, recoiling, halt,  
 And listen, fearful of a new Assault. 20  
 As, when the Serpent scales some Tow'r, possess  
 By Doves *Idalian* ; as their fears suggest,  
 The white-plum'd Parents drive their Offspring home ;  
 Then with their Claws defend th' aerial Dome,  
 And call their little Rage forth to the Fray. 25  
 Strait tho' the scaly monster hies away :  
 The Danger past, they dread to leave their Brood,  
 And sally forth in quest of wanted Food ;  
 At length with cautious Fear they wing their flight,  
 And oft look back from Heav'n's impervious Height.  
 They seek their slaughter'd Comrades on the Coast,  
 (The bloodless Relics of the mangled Host)  
 And wander o'r the blood-impurpled Mead,  
 Where Grief and Sorrow (Guides unpleasing) lead  
 Some but the Bodies of their Friends descry, 30  
 While near another's Limbs and Visage lie ;  
 Others bemoan the Chariots or accost  
 (All that remains) the Steeds whose Lords are lost,

v. 22. By Doves *Idalian*] The Expression in the Original is *Idalie Volucres* ; which, as *Idalus* was a Mount consecrated to *Venus*, and the Dove was the Favourite of that Goddess, cannot be supposed to mean any other Species of Birds, but it is very extraordinary, *Statius* should represent them so very bold.

Part kiss the gaping Wounds of Heroes slain,  
 And of their too great Fortitude complain, 40  
 Digested now the Scene of Slaughter lies :  
 Part bear huge Spears erected in their Eyes ;  
 Here sever'd from their Arms are Hands display'd,  
 Tenacious still of the discolour'd Blade :  
 In some no Traces of their Death appear, 45  
 Their Comrades rush, and shed the ready Tear.  
 Around the shapeless Trunks Debates arise,  
 The Question, who should solve their Obsequies.  
 Oft (Fortune sporting with their Woe) they pour  
 O'er hostile Chiefs a tributary Show'r ; 50  
 Nor can the Friend his slaughter'd Friend implore,  
 Or know the *Theban* from the *Grecian* Gore,  
 But those, whose Family entire remains,  
 From Sorrow free, expatiate o'er the Plains,  
 Inspect the Tents once fill'd with *Argive* Bands, 55  
 And fire them in Revenge with flaming Brands :  
 While others seek the Place, where *Tydeus* lies  
 And the fam'd Seer was ravish'd from their Eyes :  
 Or search, if still on *Jove's* blaspheming Foe  
 Th' etherial Lightnings unextinguish'd glow. 60  
 Now *Phæbus* set on their unfinish'd Grief,  
 And Vesper rose: yet heedless of Relief,

v. 53. *But those*] We find the *Trojans* diverting themselves in a similar Manner after the suppos'd Retreat of the *Grecian* Army.

Ergo omnis longo solvit se Teucrîa iustu :  
 Panduntur Portæ. juvat ire, et Dorica castra,  
 Desertoque videre Locos, Littusque relictum.  
 Hic Dolopum manus, hic sævus tendebat Achilles :  
 Classibus hic Locus ; hic acies certare solebant.

*Virg. Æn. l. 2.*

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The lengthen'd Strain, unwearied, they pursue,  
 And feasting on the Scene, their Fears renew :  
 There, disregarding the departed Light, 65  
 In Clouds they lie, and forrowing out the Night,  
 Alternate groan : (while far away retire  
 The Savage-Monsters, scar'd with Noise and Fire.)  
 Nor did their Eyes with constant Weeping close,  
 The Stars in vain persuading to repose. 70  
 Now *Phosphor* thrice an orient Lustre shed  
 O'er Heav'n, and gleam'd on the pale-visag'd Dead.  
 When the thin'd Groves, and widow'd Mountains  
 mourn

Their leafy Pride on rolling Waggon's borne.  
*Citharon*, wont to grace funeral Piles, 75  
 And fair *Theumesus* yield their verdant Spoils :  
 Prostrate on Earth the Forest's Glory lies,  
 While thick around the flaming Pyres arise.  
 The *Theban* Shades with joyful Eyes survey'd  
 This last kind Office to their Relief paid : 80  
 But the sad *Argives*, hovering round, bemoan  
 The hostile Fires, and Honours not their own.  
 No regal Exequies, and Pomp adorn  
 The Tyrant-King, neglected and forlorn ;  
 Nor his fierce Brother for a *Grecian* held, 85  
 And from his Country exil'd and expell'd ;  
 But *Thebes* and *Creon* for his Son prepare  
 More than *Plebeian* Rites, their common Care.

v 70. *The Stars*] The Original is, nec dulcibus astris victa,  
 puerunt Lūmina, which I have translated thus from the Authority  
 of *Virgil*.

————— Suadentque cadentia Sidera fomae.

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A costly Pile of choicest Wood they raise,  
 High as his Worth, and spreading as his Praise: 90  
 On this they heap the trophied Spoils of Mars,  
 Arms, batter'd Bucklers, and unwieldly Cars.  
 The Chief, as Conqueror, on these is laid,  
 With Fillets grac'd, and Wreaths that never fade.  
*Alcides* thus Mount *Oeta* press'd of yore, 95  
 By Heav'n forbid on Earth to linger more.  
 To crown the whole, the captive *Greeks* were slain,  
 And hurried in their Youth to *Pluto's* Reign.

v. 95. *Alcides thus*] As this Funeral is very elegantly describ'd  
 by *Seneca*, I shall make no Apology for transcribing it here.

Ut omnis *Oeten* moesta corripuit manus,  
 Hinc *fagus* umbras perdit, & toto jacet  
 Succisa trunco; flexit hinc *pinum* ferox  
 Astris minantem, et nube de media vocat;  
 Ruitura cautes movit, et *Sylvam* trahit  
 Secum minorem. *Chaonis* quondam loquax  
 Stat vasta late quercus, et *Phœbum* vetat,  
 Ultraque totos porrigit ramos nemus.  
 Gemit illa multo vulnere impresso minax,  
 Frangitque cuneos. resilit excussus *Chalybs*,  
 Vulnerisque ferrum patitur, et truncum fugit.  
 Commota tantum est; tunc cadens lenta morâ  
 Duxit ruinam. protinus radius locus  
 Admisit omnes —————

Aggeritur omnis *sylva*, et alternæ traves  
 In astra tollunt *Herculi* angustum rogam,  
 Ut pressit *Oeten*, ac suis oculis rogam.  
 Lustravit, omnesa fregit impositus traves,  
 Arcumque poscit: —————  
 Tum rigida secum spolia *Nemeæ* mali  
 Arsura poscit. latuit in spolia rogam.

*Herc. Oct. Act. 4. Scen. I.*

v. 97. *The captive Greeks*] Shocking as this Act of Cruelty may  
 appear to some Christian Readers, it was authoriz'd by the mili-  
 tary Customs, and religious Laws of those Times, as may be seen  
 from *Homer* and *Virgil*, who have both made their Heroes guilty  
 of it in discharging the Burial-Rites of *Petrolus* and *Pallas*.

Then well-rein'd Steeds, the Strength of War, are  
thrown.

Beside their Lord: The Sire heaves many a Groan, 100  
When *Vulcan* on the high-heap'd Victims preys;  
Then thus he cries, deep musing on the Blaze.

O thou design'd to share with me the Throne,  
And after me to govern *Thebes* alone,  
Hadst thou not, prodigal of vital Breath, 105  
To save the Realm, 'preferr'd a glorious Death:  
The Sweets of Empire, and imperial State  
Are all embitter'd by thy early Fate.

What tho' thy Presence grace the Courts of Jove,  
And mortal Virtue shine in Heav'n above: 110

To thee, my Deity, shall Vows be paid,  
And Tears a constant Tribute to thy Shade:  
Let *Thebes* high Temples raise, and Altars heap:  
Give me alone the Privilege to weep.

And now alas! what Rites shall I decree; 115

What Honours worthy of myself and thee?

O that the Gods, to deck thy sculptur'd Bust,  
Would lay the Pride of *Argos* in the Dust!

I'd crown the Pile, and yield my forfeit Breath  
With all the Honours, gain'd me by thy Death. 120

πίπυρος δ' ἱερὰ ἄχνας ἵππους  
ἔστυμνενος εὐτοάδης πυρῇ, μεγάλας συναχίζων.  
Ἐνταῦθα τῷ γὰρ ἄνακτι ἀπαπύζειν κύνες ἦσαν,  
καὶ μὲν τῇ εὐτοάδης πυρῇ δύο διαροτομήσας  
Δαδῖκα δὲ Τρώωνι μαχαθύμων ἥϊας ἰδὲ χυλὴς  
Χυλὴ δ' ἦϊων.

Iliad. Lib. 23. 173.

Addit equos et tela, quibus spoliaverat hostem.

Vinxerat et post terga manus, quos mitteret ambrosia

Inferias, caelo sparsuros sanguine flammam;

Indutesque jubet truncos hostilibus armis.

Ipsos ferre duces, inimicaque Nuntius figi.

Has

Has the same Day, and the same impious Fight  
 Consign'd with thee to Shades of endless Night  
 The Brother-Kings? — then, *Oedipus*, we bear  
 An equal Part in Sorrow and Despair:  
 Yet how resembling are the Shades we moan, 125  
 Witness, O Jove; to thee their Worth is known.  
 Accept, sweet Youth, the First-fruits of my Reign,  
 Nor these bright Ensigns of Command disdain;  
 Which e'en Ambition's self might blush to wear,  
 When purchas'd with the Price of Blood so dear. 130  
 May proud *Eteocles* thy Pomp survey,  
 And sicken at his alienated Sway.  
 This said, his Crown and Scepter he resigns,  
 And with redoubled Fury thus rejoins:  
 Censure, who will; 'tis my Command, that none 135  
 Shall mix their Burial-Rites with thine, my Son.  
 O could I lengthen out their Sense of Pain,  
 And drive from *Erebus* the *Greeks* slain!  
 Yet Birds and Beasts shall on their Leader prey,  
 And to the public Eye his Heart display. 140  
 But *Sol* resolves them to their pristine State,  
 And Earth conceals from my revengeful Hate.  
 This Edict I repeat, that none offend  
 Through Ignorance, or Ignorance pretend,

v. 137. *O could*] In this Address of *Cræon* to his Son we may observe a Mixture of Tenderness and Ferocity, which is very consistent with and agreeable to his Character: and while we are displeased with the implacable Enemy, we should not withhold the Praise due to the loving and affectionate Parent. I think, this Behaviour is a sufficient Confutation of *Eteocles*'s Calumny in the preceding Book.

No Grief could move thee for *Menæceus*' Death,  
 But rather Joy, he thus resign'd his Breath.

What Wretch but rears a Tomb, or wills to rear,  
 And makes the Relics of a Foe his Care; 146  
 His Carcase shall the *Grecian's* Place supply:  
 Attest, my Son, and ye that rule the Sky.  
 He spoke; nor willing sought the regal Court.  
 Meanwhile, assembled at the first Report 150  
 Of *Creon's* Rage, the Dames of *Argive* Strain,  
 Who wept their Fathers, and their Husbands slain,  
 Attir'd as Mourners, or a captive Band,  
 In sad Procession move along the Strand,  
 All gash'd with Wounds: dishevel'd was their Hair,  
 The same their Habit, and their Breasts were bare:  
 From their torn Checks a crimson Current flows;  
 And their soft Arms were swoln with cruel Blows;  
*Argia*, senior of the sable Train,  
 Whose fault'ring Steps two grieving Maids sustain, 160  
 Majestically sad and slow precedes,  
 And asks the Way, unknowing, where she leads.  
 The Palace loath'd, her Sire no more at Heart,  
 And all neglected, but her better Part;  
 She dwells upon the Valour of her Spouse, 165  
 And Love, tenacious of the Marriage-Vows:  
 And *Thebes*, the Ruin of her Country's Host,  
 Prefers to *Argas*, and th' *Inachian* Coast.  
 To her the Consort of th' *Ætolian* Chief  
 Succeeds, and equals in the Pomp of Grief 170  
 Her Sister-Queen: with her a mingled Throng  
 From *Calydon* and *Lerna* march along.  
 More wretched, as she heard th' unworthy Fate  
 Of *Menalippus*, and her Spouse's Hate.  
 Yet she forgives, and, while she disapproves 175  
 The flagrant Sin, the pleasing Sinner loves.



Next came *Hippomedon's* dejected Queen,  
 Of Manners soft, tho' savage was her Mien.  
 Then *Eriphyle*, who presumes in vain  
 By pompous Rites to wash away her Stain. 180  
*Diana's* childless Comrade clos'd the Rear,  
 The fair *Menalian* Nymphs beneath her Care;  
 With her *Evadne* pregnant: one exclaims  
 Against her daring Son's ambitious Aims:  
 But, mindful of her Spouse, and Parent *Mars*, 185  
 The other, stern in Tears, upbraids the Stars.  
 Chaste *Hecate* from the *Lycean* Grove  
 Beheld, and heav'd a Sigh; while as they rove  
 Along the double Shore, *Leucothea* spies,  
 And from her *Isthmian* Tomb loud-wailing cries. 190  
*Ceres*, her private Woes in theirs forgot,  
 Held forth the mystic Torch, and wept their Lot.  
 E'en *Juno*, Partner of aerial Sway,  
 Conducts them through a safe, tho' secret Way,  
 Lest shou'd their People meet, th' Emprize be cross'd,  
 And all it's promis'd Fame and Glory lost. 196  
 Nor various *Iris* less employ'd her Care.  
 To guard the Dead from putrefying Air:  
 O'er ev'ry tainted Limb with Skill she pours  
 Ambrosial Dews, and mystic Juices show'rs; 200  
 Left, they decay before the Flames consume,  
 And their sad Friends consign them to the Tomb.

v. 197. *Nor various Iris*] This Fiction is borrowed from *Homer*, who introduces *Thetis* performing the same kind Office to the Body of *Patroclus*; though I think the Allegory is not so just and natural in the Imitation.

Πατρόκλου δ' αὐτ' ἀμβροσίην καὶ νέκταρ ἐρυσσὼν  
 Σπένξει καὶ ῥίαν, ἵνα οἱ χεῖρε μπιπιδῷ σῆν'

*Iliad*. L. 19. V. 38.

But *Ornithus*, disabled in the Fray,  
 And by his Troops deserted, takes his Way  
 Thro' thick Recesses, that exclude the Light, 205  
 Of *Sol*, a recent Wound impedes his Flight :  
 Pale were his Cheeks with loss of Blood and Fear,  
 His Steps supported by a broken Spear.  
 Soon as he hears th' unwonted Tumult rise,  
 And views the female Cohorts with Surprise, 210  
 Enquiries none he makes about their Woes,  
 Nor ask the Reasons, which themselves disclose.  
 But took the Word, and first his Silence broke,  
 The Stream of Grief descending, as he spoke :  
 Say, Wretches, whither haste ye ? what you are, 215  
 And why this fun'ral Pageant you prepare ?  
 When Day and Night commission'd Soldiers stand  
 To guard the Shades by *Creon's* harsh Command ;  
 When inaccessible to all remain,  
 But Birds and Beasts, the Bodies of the slain, 220  
 Unwept and uninterr'd. — Will he relent  
 His stubborn Soul by your Intreaties bent ?  
 Believe me, sooner might your Pray'rs assuage  
 Th' Egyptian Tyrant's Altars, and the Rage  
 Of *Diomedes's* half-famish'd Steeds : or move 225  
*Sicilian* Gods, the Progeny of *Jove*.

v. 224. *Th' Egyptian Tyrant's*] *Bufris* King of *Egypt* was wont to sacrifice Strangers to his Gods ; but being overcome by *Hercules* underwent the same Fate.

*Diomedes* King of *Thrace*, fed his Horses with human Flesh, and was slain by the above-mentioned Hero.

v. 226. *Sicilian Gods*] *Lactantius* gives us the following Account of these Deities.

The Nymph *Etna* having consented to the Embraces of *Jupiter* was pursued by *Juno*, and imploring the Assistance of the Earth was receiv'd into her Bosom, and bore two Twins, who for their

If well I know the Man, perchance he'll dare  
 To seize your Persons in the Act of Pray'r,  
 And slaughter each not o'er her Husband's Corse,  
 But distant far, unknowing of Remorse. 230  
 Retreat ye then, while yet secure you may,  
 And when you reach again *Mycenæ*, pay  
 A *Cenotaph*, the utmost that remains,  
 While thus the breathless Heroes press the Plains.  
 Or will ye stay t' implore the passing Aid 235  
 Of *Theseus*, who with Ensigns high display'd  
 Returns in Triumph from *Thermodon's* Shore,  
 Clogg'd with the Dead, and red with female Gore?  
 Arms must compel him to commence the Man,  
 And form his Morals on a juster Plan. 240  
 He said: their Tears with Horror stand congeal'd,  
 And Grief and Passion to Amazement yield;  
 From ev'ry Face at once the Colour flies,  
 And all their Ardor for th' Adventure dies.  
 Thus, when the Tiger's Howl (terrific Sound) 245  
 Has reach'd the Herd in some capacious Ground,  
 Thro' the whole Field a sudden Terror reigns;  
 And all, forgetful of the grassy Plains,

Virtues were admitted into the Society of the Gods, and had divine Honours paid them, but they were only appeas'd with human Blood.

v. 233. *A Cenotaph*] This was a Kind of Mock-Funeral, and is thus described by *Virgil* in the 3d Book of his *Æneid*;

Ante urbem in luco falsi Simoentis ad undam  
 Libabat cineri Andromache, manesque vocabat  
 Hectoreum ad tumulum, viridi quem cespite inanem  
 Et geminas, causam lacrymis, sacra verat aras.

For a farther Account of this Ceremony see *Xenophon's* *Kyrov Anagorais*, Lib. 6, and *Tacitus's* *Annals*, Lib. 1. & 11. and *Suetonius* in the Life of *Claudius*.

Stand mute with Expectation, who shall please,  
 And first the Foe's rapacious Maw appease. 250  
 Forthwith a Series of Debates arose,  
 And various Schemes in Order they propose:  
 Some will, to *Thebes* that instant they repair,  
 And tempt the King by Blandishment and Pray'r;  
 For Aid on *Theseus* others would rely: 255  
 But all disdain, nought enterpriz'd, to fly.  
 Not thus *Argia* with the rest despairs;  
 With more than female Fortitude she bears  
 The News dissuasive, and, her Sex resign'd,  
 Attempts a Deed of the most daring Kind. 260  
 She glows with Hope of dangerous Applause;  
 Won by the Breach of *Creon's* impious Laws,  
 And courts, what the most hardy *Thracian* Dame,  
 Tho' fenc'd with Virgin-Cohorts, would disclaim.  
 She meditates, by what fallacious Cheat, 265  
 Unnotic'd by the rest, she may retreat,  
 Rash and regardless of her Life thro' Grief,  
 And urg'd by Love of her much-injur'd Chief,  
 Or gain his dear Remains, or else provoke  
 The Tyrant to inflict a deadly Stroke. 270  
 In ev'ry Act and Character appear'd  
 Her Spouse confest; one while a Guest rever'd,  
 Now at the Altars of the Pow'rs above,  
 And now the sweet Artificer of Love,  
 Then sheath'd in Arms, and quitting her Embrace,  
 With ling'ring Eyes, and Anguish in his Face. 276  
 Yet most that imag'd Form recurs to Sight,  
 Which, bare and naked from the Scene of Fight,  
 Demands the Pile. — disturb'd with Cares like these,  
 She sickens, and since nought her Grievs can ease

Flies to grim Death : for yet untasted Rest,  
 (The chafteft Ardour in a female Breast)  
 Then, turning to her *Argive* Comrades, cries :  
 Do you, in Favour of our juft Emprize,  
 Sollicit *Theſeus*, crown'd with hostile Spoils, 285  
 And may Succels attend your pious Toils.  
 But ſuffer me, from whom alone aroſe  
 Theſe grievous Ills and yet unequal'd Woes,  
 To penetrate the *Theban* Court, and prove  
 The menac'd Thunder of this earthly *Jove*. 290  
 Nor at our Entrance ſhall we find the Town  
 Inhospitable, or ourſelves unknown;  
 My Huſband's Sire and Siſters will defend  
 His wretched Widow and her Cauſe befriend.  
 Only retreat not; to theſe hostile Walls 295  
 My own Deſire, an happy Omen, calls.  
 She ceas'd : and as a Partner of the Way,  
*Menates* took (beneath whoſe gentle Sway  
 Her youthful Age receiv'd an early Store  
 Of mental Charms, reſign'd to Virtue's Lore) 300  
 And, though a Stranger to the Road, purſu'd  
 The Steps of *Ornitus*, diſtinctly view'd.  
 But, when impetuous as the driving Wind,  
 She'd left the Partners of her Woe behind.  
 Shall I, O much lov'd Source of Grief, (ſhe cries) 305  
 While foul in Duſt thy flighted Carcaſe lies,  
 Expect an Answer from th' *Athenian* King,  
 And wait for Aid, which he may never bring ?  
 Or hesitate for Sanction from above,  
 To execute the Dictates of my Love ? 310  
 While thy Remains decreaſe by this Delay.  
 Why do I yield not to the Birds of Prey

These viler Limbs ? and now alas ! if ought  
 Of Sense survives, or Soul-engendred Thought,  
 To *Stygian* Gods perchance thou dost complain, 315  
 And wonder, what can thus thy Wife detain.  
 Whether intomb'd, or bare beneath the Skies  
 Thy Corse remains, on me th' Omission lies.  
 No more then Death and *Creon* shall withstand :  
 Nor Love and *Ornitus* in vain command. 320  
 This said, she scours the *Megareian* Plain  
 With rapid Pace, and seeks the small Domain.  
 Of *Creon* ; each she meets, in Haste replies  
 To her Demands, and turns aside his Eyes,  
 Affrighted at her Garb. — thus on she goes, 325  
 Of Aspect stern, confiding in her Woes :  
 Alike intrepid in her Heart and Ear ;  
 And, far from fearing, she inspires with Fear.  
 In *Phrygia* thus when *Dindymus* rebounds  
 With Shrieks nocturnal, and with doleful Sounds, 330  
 The frantic Leader of the Matrons flies  
 To where the waves of *Simoïs* arise ;  
 Whose sacred Blade the Goddess did bestow,  
 What time with Wreaths she grac'd her awful Brow.  
*Hyperion* now in western Deep's had hurl'd 335  
 His flaming Car, and fought the nether World ;

v. 329. In *Phrygia* thus when *Dindymus*] *Dyndimus* or *Dindyma*  
 were two Mountains near *Ida* in *Phrygia*, consecrated to *Cybele*,  
 and famous for the Solemnization of her sacred Rites, as we learn  
 from *Virgil*.

O vere *Phrygiæ*, neque enim *Phryges* ! ite per alta  
*Dindyma*, ubi assuetis biforem dat tibia cantum.  
*Tympana* vos *Buxusque* vocant *Berecynthia matris*  
*Ideæ*. ————— *Æn.* 9. Verse 617.

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When imperceptibly the tedious Day,  
 Beguil'd, by Toils of Sorrow, steals away.  
 Secure o'er darksome Meads, and Rocks, 'twixt Beams,  
 That totter to their Fall, thro' swelling Streams, 340  
 And Groves, that ne'er admit the piercing Rays  
 Of *Phæbus*, baffling his Meridian Blaze,  
 And Dykes, and Furrows of th' indented Field,  
 From her incurious Eyes by Night conceal'd,  
 Thro' the green Couch of Monsters, and the Den, 345  
 Possess'd by Beasts, and unexplor'd by Men,  
 Direct and unoppos'd she speeds her Flight:  
 No Toils fatigue her, and no Perils fright.  
*Menætes* follows slow. — Shame stings his Mind,  
 And wild Amazement to be left behind. 350  
 Where for Instruction did she not apply,  
 Whilst her chaste Bosom heav'd with many a Sigh?  
 Oft the Path lost, a devious Way she took,  
 When, her chief Solace, the bright Flames forsook  
 Her erring Feet, or the cold Shades of Night, 355  
 Back'd by the Wind, expell'd the guiding Light?  
 But when the Mount of *Pentheus* they descend,  
 And, weary, to the Vale their Footsteps bend;  
*Menætes*, nearly spent, the Nymph address,  
 While frequent Pantings heav'd his aged Breast. 360  
 Not far (if Hope of the near finish'd Way  
 Flatters me not) the Champion I survey,  
 Where the fell Scene of Blood and Carnage lies,  
 And, intermix'd with Clouds, the Domes arise.  
 A noisome Stench pervades the steaming Air, 365  
 And rav'nous Birds in Flocks obscene repair.  
 This is the fatal Plain, the Seat of War;  
 Nor is the Town of *Cadmus* distant far.

See, how the Field projects the length'ning Shade  
 Of Walls, upon its surface wide display'd, 370  
 While dying *Vulcan* faintly shines between  
 From the Watch-Tow'r, and swells the solemn Scene !  
 The Night was late more still, the Stars alone  
 Cast a faint Lustre round her ebon Throne.  
 So spake *Menates*; and the trembling Fair 375  
 With Hands extended thus addrest her Pray'r :  
 O *Thebes*, once fought with more than vulgar Toil,  
 Though hostile now, again a friendly Soil,  
 Should *Creon* deign to render back entire  
 My Lord's Remains, to feed the fun'ral Fire : 380  
 View, with what Pomp, what Follo'wers at her Call,  
 The wife of *Polynices* seeks thy Wall !  
 Full modest is my Suit, nor hard the Task  
 To gratify : my Spouse is all I ask ;  
 My Spouse long outlaw'd, and expos'd to Want, 385  
 (His Throne usurp'd) to my Entreaties grant.  
 Nor linger thou in *Pluto's* griesly Dome,  
 If ought of Form subsist, and Phantoms roam ;

v. 369. *See, how the Field*] This Description is scarce inferior to any in the whole Work. It is as beautiful a Night-Piece as can be found in Poetry. The Shade of the Walls projecting into the Field before the City, the Light on the Watch-Towers breaking out by Fits here and there, and the Stillness of the Night present a fine Picture to the Imagination. The Colouring is so strong, that one may almost fancy seeing the disconsolate Princess walking under the Walls, and deliberating how to act.

v. 388. *If ought of Form subsist*] Mr. Pope's Note on the following Verses of *Homer*

Ω ποποι, ἤρά τις ἐπὶ καὶ εἰν Λιδῶο δομοισιν  
 τυχεῖ καὶ εἰδωλον, ἄταρ φρενας οὐκ αἰὶ παμπαν.

will throw a good Deal of Light on this Matter.



But if thy Favours I deserve, precede,  
 And to thy earthly Part thy Confort lead. 390  
 She said : and hast'ning to a neighb'ring Cot,  
 Some simple Swain's secure, tho' slender Lot,  
 Repairs her Torch extinguish'd by the Wind,  
 And rushes forwards, turbulent of Mind.  
 Such was the Search, that pensive *Ceres* made, 395  
 (Her Child convey'd to the *Tartarean* Shade)

This Passage will be clearly understood, by explaining the Notion which the Ancients entertain'd of the Souls of the departed, according to the forecited triple Division, or Mind, Image and Body. They imagin'd, that the Soul was not only separated from the Body at the Hour of Death, but that there was a farther Separation of the *φρην*, or Understanding from its *Εἰδωλον*, or Vehicle ; so that the *Εἰδωλον*, or Image of the Body, being in Hell, the *φρην* or Understanding might be in Heaven : and that this is a true Explanation is evident from a Passage in the *Odyssæy*. B. 11. V. 600.

Τὸν δὲ μετ' εἰσενέσσει βην, Ἡρακλῆειαν  
 Εἰδωλον. αὐτὸς δὲ μετ' ἀθανάτοισι θύοισι  
 Τριπύτῃ ἐν θάλασσῃ, ἣ ἔχει καλλιόφυρον Ἠέην.

By this it appears that *Homer* was of Opinion that *Hercules* was in Heaven, while his *Εἰδωλον*, or Image was in Hell : so that when this second Separation is made, the Image or Vehicle becomes a meer thoughtless Form.

We have this whole Doctrine very distinctly deliver'd by *Plutarch* in these Works : "Man is a compound Subject : but not of two Parts, as is commonly believ'd, because the Understanding is generally accounted a Part of the Soul ; whereas indeed it as far exceeds the Soul, as the Soul is diviner than the Body. Now the Soul, when compounded with the Understanding, makes Reason, and when compounded with the Body, Passion : whereof the one is the Source or Principle of Pleasure or Pain, the other of Vice or Virtue. Man therefore properly dies two Deaths ; the first Death makes him two of three, and the second makes him one of two."

*Plutarch* of the Face in the Moon.

See *Homer's Iliad*, Volum. 2. Lib. 22.

586 STATIUS'S THEBAID. BOOK XII.

With Lamp in Hand, whose well-reflected Light  
 Varied each Side, with Rays alternate bright,  
 She trac'd the Chariot-Ruts, distinctly view'd,  
 And Step by Step the Ravisher pursu'd. 400  
 Th' imprison'd Giant ecchoes back again  
 Her frantic Shrieks, and lightens all the Plain  
 With bursting Fire from the *Vulcanian* Hall;  
 And Rivers, Forests, Hills, and Vallies call  
*Persephone*: the Court of *Dis* alone 405  
 Is silent midst the universal Groan.  
 Her Friend reminds her oft of *Creon's* Ire,  
 And warns to hide the interdicted Fire.  
 Thus she, who reign'd o'er many a *Grecian* Town,  
 With ev'ry Virtue, that adorns a Crown, 410  
 In War redoubted, and in Peace belov'd,  
 Admir'd for Beauty, and for Worth approv'd,  
 Amidst the dreary Horrors of the Night,  
 Without a social Guide, her Foes in Sight,  
 Undaunted strays thro' Meadows cover'd o'er 415  
 With deathful Arms, and slippery with Gore,  
 While injur'd Ghosts flit round her, and demand  
 Their Limbs disjoin'd, and scatter'd on the Strand.  
 Oft as the lifeless Bodies are explor'd  
 With curious Inquest, on the Spear or Sword 420  
 She treads unheeding, all her Thoughts employ'd  
 Her Lord's mistaken Relics to avoid  
 Now leaning o'er the Carcasses, she strains  
 Her Eyes, and of the Want of Light complains;

v. 424. *And of the Want of Light complains*] *Lactantius*, contrary to the general Practice of Commentators, convicts *Statius* of a slip of his Memory in representing *Argia* without a Torch, and presently

BOOK XII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 587

When *Juno*, who, to save her chosen Race, 425  
 Had stolen from the Thunderer's Embrace,  
 And, taking all Advantage of the Time,  
 Shot down to *Athens* from th' aerial Clime,  
 To move the Mind of *Pallas*, and prepare  
 The City to receive each suppliant Fair; 430  
 Beheld th' *Inachian* Princess, as in vain  
 She toil'd erroneous on the spacious Plain,  
 And, grieving at the Sight, awhile resign'd  
 To Pity's gentle Lore her tender Mind:  
 And, stopping near the Sister of the Sun 435  
 Her Chariot, thus in Accents mild begun.  
 At *Cynthia's* Hands if *Juno* claim Regard,  
 Her Merit with a due Return reward.  
 For Night prolong'd, to crown a vicious Flame,  
 And other Insults, I forbear to name, 440

sently after hinting that she had one; condemning him from his own Words.

———— Aliamque ad busta ferebat

Antigone miseranda facem ——— Verse 349.  
 How (says he) could *Antigone* be said to bear another Torch, unless *Argia* had one before. But this is a mere critical Cavil. — *Argia* might have a Torch at the Time the Poet mentions, though not before. It may then be asked, why the Poet did not tell us of it? — To this I answer, that it was needless he should inform us of it, unless he could do it without seeming desirous of it, and going out of his Subject on Purpose.

v. 439. For Night prolong'd] *Jupiter*, having lain with *Alcmena* in the Form of her Husband *Amphitryon*, thinking the Space of one Night insufficient for his Pleasures, order'd the Moon to make it as long as three, which (we find from this Speech of *Juno*) she complied with. — *Laſtantius*.

*Ovid* also takes Notice of it in *Dejanira's* Epistle to *Hercules*.

At non ille velit, cui Nox (ſi creditor) una  
 Non tanti, ut tantus conciperere, ſuit.

Grant my Request, and by Compliance shun  
 The Wrath incurr'd for Crimes already done.  
 See, circumfus'd in Night *Argia* strays,  
 A Dame as worthy of our Aid as Praise!  
 In vain she toils around th' ensanguin'd Field, 445  
 Until thy stronger Rays Assistance yield.  
 Exert thy Horns, and, nearer in thy Course,  
 Shine down on Earth with more than wonted Force;  
 While Sleep, who guides thy Chariot thro' the Skies,  
 Descends to close each watchful *Theban's* Eyes. 450  
 Scarce had she spoke, when from a bursting Cloud  
 The Goddess held her Orb forth midst a Crowd  
 Of lesser Stars, and gilds the dewy Plains:  
 The dazzling Lustre *Juno* scarce sustains.  
 The Princess viewing now, recalls to Thought 455  
 The purple Robe, her skilful Hands had wrought,  
 Altho' the Texture was effac'd with Gore,  
 Nor the bright Hue so vivid as before;  
 And while she calls on Heav'n in plaintive Strains,  
 And fears; that this small Gift alone remains 460  
 To grace his Obsequies, and future Bust,  
 She sees his Body trampled in the Dust.  
 Forthwith her Speech, her Sight, her Motion flies,  
 And Grief suspends the Torrent in her Eyes.

v. 463. *Forthwith her Speech*] Mr. Dryden in his Poem on the Death of *Charles* the Second has some fine Lines, that very nearly resemble our Author's.

Thus long my Grief has kept me dumb:  
 Sure there's a Lethargy in mighty Woe,  
 Tears stand congeal'd, and cannot flow;  
 And the sad Soul retires into her inmost Room:  
 Tears, for a stroke foreseen, affords Relief;  
 But unprovided for a sudden Blow,  
 Like *Niobe*, we Marble grow;  
 And petrify with Grief.

BOOK XII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 589

Then grov'ling o'er the Slain, with warm Embrace  
 She clasp'd his Limbs, and kiss'd his clay-cold Face; 466  
 And from his stiff'ning Hair, and costly Vest  
 The clotted Gore with Care assiduous press'd.  
 Her Voice returning, on her Spouse she roll'd  
 Her Eyes, and cry'd : — Art thou, whom I behold 470  
*Adrastus*' Heir, and Leader of the Fight,  
 In bold Assertion of a Monarch's Right?  
 And do I thus array'd thy Triumphs meet?  
 See, see *Argia* seeks a safe Retreat  
 At *Thebes*. — O lead her then within the Walls 475  
 To thy paternal Roof, and regal Halls;  
 And seize th' Occasion, which she gives, to prove  
 Thy grateful Sense of her experienc'd Love.  
 Alas! what do I ask? — a slender Spot  
 Of native Earth is all my Consort's Lot. 480  
 For what this Quarrel then, and impious Fray?  
 Forbid it Heav'n's, his Brother e'er should sway.  
 Weeps not *Jocasta*, tender-hearted Dame?  
 Where is *Antigone*, so known to Fame?  
 Fate wills then, thou shou'dst lie for me alone, 485  
 To torture me, in cruel Fight o'erthrown.  
 In vain I said; ah! whither dost thou fly  
 For Crowns, and Scepters, which the Gods deny?  
 Let *Argive* Honours bound thy rash Desire,  
 Nor thus beyond what Fortune grants aspire. 490  
 Yet why do I complain? — I gave the Sword,  
 And my sad Sire in thy Behalf implor'd,  
 To find thee thus. — Yet will I not repine;  
 Resign'd to your Decrees, O Pow'rs divine!  
 His Relics by your Aid obtain'd repay 495  
 The Toils and anxious Sorrows of the Way.

Alas! with what a Gape descends the Wound;  
 Was this his Brother? on what Spot of Ground  
 Lies the fell Murd'rer? — could I know the Way,  
 I'd rob the Beasts, and Vultures of their Prey. 500  
 But he perhaps enjoys a decent Pyre;  
 And shalt thou mourn the Want of ritual Fire?  
 Ah! no. — With equal Honours shalt thou burn,  
 And Tears rain copious o'r the golden Urn,  
 To Kings deny'd: thy Tomb for e'er shall prove 505  
 The pleasing Duty of my widow'd Love;  
 And young *Theſſander* to thy Bed succeed,  
 A Witness to the Woes, on which I feed.  
 Behold *Antigone* with trembling Hand  
 Bears for the furtive Rites another Brand, 510  
 Shares all the Woe, and heaves the distant Groan  
 Scarce could she gain an Egress from the Town:  
 For *Creon* ever wary, to retard  
 The Breach of his Command, increas'd the Guard  
 So that more oft revolves the watching-Hour, 515  
 And thicker burns the Fire on ev'ry Tow'r.  
 Her Brother therefore, and the Gods she prays,  
 To speed her Flight, and pardon her Delays;  
 And, frantic, rushes from the silent Walls,  
 While drowsy *Morpheus* on the Sentry falls. 520  
 With such a Bound along the Meadow springs  
 The Virgin-Lioness, when Anger wings

v. 514. *And young Theſſander*] This is an Allusion to the famous Speed of *Dido* in the fourth Book of *Virgil's Æneid*.

Saltem si qua mihi de te suscepta fuisset  
 Ante fugam Soboles; si quis mihi parvulus aula  
 Luderet Æneas, qui te tantum ore referret.

Barthius

Her rapid Progress, or when Hopes of Prey  
 Allure her from her shady Den away.  
 Nor a long time elaps'd, before she gain'd 525  
 The Place by *Polynices*' Blood distain'd.  
*Menates* meets her traversing the Plains,  
 And his dear Pupil's deep-fetch'd Groans restrains.  
 But, when the growing Noise had reach'd the Ear  
 Of the sad Virgin all erect thro' Fear; 530  
 And by the Torches Light, and friendly Rays  
 Of *Cynthia*, more distinctly she surveys  
*Argia*'s bloody Face, dishevel'd Hair,  
 And sable Vest she thus bespeaks the Fair:  
 Say, daring Wretch, what Chief o'erthrown in Fight  
 Thou seek'st, encroaching on my proper Right? 536  
 To this she nought replies, but o'er her Spouse,  
 And her own Face a sable Veil she throws,  
 For Fear at first her ev'ry Thought possesseth,  
 And Grief awhile forsook her tender Breast. 540  
 This Length of Silence but the more increas'd  
 The Dame's Surmise, nor her Enquiries ceas'd:  
 Her Comrade then she presses, while they gaze,  
 With Horror fixt, and silent with Amaze:  
 At length the Princess thus her Silence broke, 545  
 And, clasping in her Arms the Body, spoke.  
 If, in the Search of some Relation slain,  
 Thou roamest, darkling, thro' the bloody Plain,  
 And fearest angry *Creon*'s stern Decree,  
 My secret Purpose I reveal to thee. 550  
 If thou art wretched (as thy Tears avow)  
 Why join we not our Hands, and make a Vow  
 Of Amity? — *Adrastus*' Daughter I,  
 Hopeful by Stealth, and mutual Secrecy,

My *Polynices*' poor Remains to burn, 555  
 And close his Ashes in a precious Urn :  
 But who art thou ? — Astonish'd with Surprise,  
 The *Theban* Damsel, trembling, thus replies.  
 Me then (O Ignorance of human Race!)  
 Me dost thou fear, and hold in thy Embrace 560  
 My Brother's Limbs, unwilling to disclose ?  
 To thee, the tender Partner of my Woes,  
 The friendly Task with Blushes I resign,  
 And own my luke-warm Love excell'd by thine.  
 Thus she. — When, grov'ling with disorder'd Charms  
 Around the Prince, they fold him in their Arms; 566  
 Their falling Tears, and Hair together blend,  
 (While eagerly to kiss him they contend)  
 And with mix'd Groans their Lips by Turns employ  
 On his dear Face and Neck, and share the Joy. 570  
 A Brother one, and one a Husband plains ;  
 And *Thebes* and *Argos* in alternate Strains  
 They sing : but most *Argia* calls to Mind  
 Their num'rous Griefs, hard Lot and Fate's unkind.  
 By this our common Rite of secret Woe, 575  
 Yon social Manes, and the Stars that glow

v. 575. *By this our common Rite*] Our Author, to put a finishing Stroke to the Characters of *Argia* and *Antigone*, presents us with an Interview between them, in which their Dispositions and Manners are conveyed to us through the Channel of Discourse. From a Comparison of the Conduct of these Ladies we may infer, that Love transcends natural Affection in a very eminent Degree. *Argia*, fearing lest her Sister should not persevere in assisting at the funeral Rites of her Husband through Dread of *Creon*'s Displeasure, tells her of his sincere Regard and Esteem, and prompts her to exert herself, without seeming to do it. — The Art of the Poet is very visible on this Occasion.



In Heaven, conscious of the Truth, I swear,  
That never, when he breath'd our *Argive* Air,  
His dear, though absent, Sister scap'd his Thought  
Her only he desir'd, her only fought. 580

Whilst his lov'd Mother, and his native Clime,  
His Crown detain'd beyond th' allotted Time  
Without one Tear or Sigh were left behind,  
And I, a lesser Care, with Ease resign'd.

But thou perhaps from some huge Turret's Height  
Hast seen him toiling thro' the Ranks of Fight, 586

While, as with martial Air he strode along,  
With Eyes reverted from amidst the Throng,  
He wav'd his Sword, and bow'd his triple Crest,  
An Honour paid to those, he lov'd the best, 590

While we at Distance pin'd. — What God cou'd fire,  
The furious Pair to such Excess of Ire?

Could not your Prayers move his stubborn Breast?

And was a Sister's Suit in vain address'd?

Now had the Dame the woeful Fact disclos'd, 595

But thus their faithful Comrade interpos'd:

Come on and first your Enterprize pursue:

The Stars, retiring, wear a paler Hue,

And Morn advances. — When the Work is sped,

Then pour your boundless Sorrows o'er the Dead 600

Not far remote, *Ismenos* roll'd his Flood,

Still foul with Slaughter, and distain'd with Blood.

v. 595. *Now had the Dame*] This seems an indirect Stroke on female Loquacity. The two Princesses, forgetful of the Object of their Enterprize, fall into a long Conversation, which in all Probability might have lasted till Day-light, had not their good Friend *Menestes* admonished them of their Duty.

Hither the feeble Pair by mutual Aid  
 The Warrior's lacerated Corps convey'd,  
 The little Strength he has, *Mænetes* lends, 605  
 And to support the Load, his Arm extends.  
 Thus *Phaeton*, from *Vulcan's* Fury sav'd,  
 In *Po's* warm Stream his pious Sisters lav'd,  
 To Trees transform'd, and sorrowing for his Doom,  
 Ere scarce his smoaking Body fill'd the Tomb. 610  
 Soon as They cleans'd their Brother in the Ford,  
 And to their proper Form his Limbs restor'd,  
 They print the parting Kifs on either Cheek,  
 And Fire, to close the Rites, assiduous seek:  
 But ev'ry Spark extinct, and Flame o'ercome 615  
 By vap'ry Damps, desponding long they roam.  
 Preserv'd by Chance, or Providence, there stood,  
 Not distant far, a high-heap'd Pile of Wood:  
 Whether some Fiend the Fires discordant spar'd,  
 Or Nature for new Prodigies prepar'd, 620  
 Is yet unsaid, the Cause remains unknown:  
*Eteocles* upon the Top was thrown.  
 Here they perceive a slender Gleam of Light  
 From sable Oaks, and joyful at the Sight,  
 In Haste implore the unknown Shade, who claims 625  
 The Structure, to divide the grateful Flames  
 With *Polynices*, nor disdain to burn  
 On the same Pyre, and share one common Urn.  
 Again behold the Brothers! — When the Fire  
 Pervades their Limbs in many a curling Spire, 630

v. 607. *Thus Phaeton*] The Story of *Phaeton's* Fall from Heaven is too well known to be enlarged upon in a Note. See *Ovid's* *Metamorphoses*, Lib. 2. Fable 1.

v. 629. *Again behold the Brothers!*] This Fiction is very properly inserted, and if it is not the Poet's Invention, does great Honour

The vast Pile trembles, and th' Intruder's Corse  
 Is driven ~~from~~ the Pile with sudden Force;  
 The Flames, dividing at the Points, ascend,  
 And at each other adverse Rays extend.  
 Thus, when the Ruler of th' infernal State 635  
 (Pale-visag'd *Dis*) commits to stern Debate  
 The Sister-Fiends, their Brands, held forth to Fight,  
 Now clash, then part, and shed a transient Light.  
 The very Beasts disjoin before their Eyes:  
 With Hell-bred Terrors smit, each Virgin cries: 640  
 Through our default then do the Flames engage,  
 And have our Hands renew'd fraternal Rage?  
 For who however cruel in the Fray,  
 Wou'd drive an injur'd *Theban's* Shade away?  
 But our *Eteocles*? — The Shield I know, 645  
 And half-burnt Girdle of the Brother Foe.  
 Mark, how the Fire recedes, then joins again!  
 Deep fixt as erst their Enmities remain.  
 Fruitless the War! In vain afresh they join  
 In fight: O Tyrant, for the Palm is thine: 650  
 Whence then this useless Rage, this martial Heat,  
 When he usurps the Crown, and regal Seat?  
 Resign your Threats; and thou, the younger, bend,  
 Nor more for alienated Sway contend.

nour to his Judgment. Such Traits of the Marvellous have a fine Effect in Poetry. *Lucan* has imitated it in his Account of the Prodigious that ushered in the civil War between *Cæsar* and *Pompey*. *Pharsalia*, Lib. i.

————— Vestali raptus ab arā  
 Ignis, et ostendens confectas flamma Latinas  
 Scinditur in partes, geminoque cacumine surgit,  
 Thebanos imitata rogos. —————

At our joint Suit O close the direful Scene, 655

Or, to prevent your Rage, we rush between.

Scarce had she spoke, when with a rumbling Sound

The Field and lofty Houses shook around :

The Pile yawn'd wider, and his Slumbers broke,

From Dreams of Woe the starting Soldier woke, 660

And, running o'er the Plain, with naked Sword

Each secret Pass and Avenue explor'd.

*Menates* only dreads th' advancing Band,

While they before the Pyre, undaunted, stand,

Avow the Breach of *Creon's* harsh Decree, 665

And lift the Shout of Triumph, as they see

Their Brother's Body to the Flames a Prey,

And ev'ry mould'ring Limb consum'd away.

If ought disturbs the Tenour of their Mind,

'Tis but the Fear, that *Creon* should be kind 670

They both dispute, whose Labours merit most

Of Glory, and the Crime alternate boast.

I brought the Corse, and I the Structure fir'd,

Me Love (they cry) me Piety inspir'd.

The cruel Punishment thus each demands, 675

And thro' the Chains, delighted, thrusts her Hands.

No more that Caution to offend remains,

Nor mutual Reverence their Stile restrains :

Both angry seem, such jarring Clamors rise

On either Side, and rend the vaulted Skies. 580

v. 669. *If ought*] The Magnanimity of these two Heroines is equal to any thing recorded of the fair Sex both in Fable and History. One cannot but cry out with *Tasso*.

O Spettacolo grande, ove à tenzone

Sono Amore, e magnanima Virtute!

Ove la morte al vincitor si pone

In premio, e'l mal del vinto è la Salute!

BOOK XII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 597

The Guards, who seiz'd them, are dispatch'd to Court,  
Before the King the Matter to report.

But *Pallas* ushers in the female Band  
To the *Cecropian* Town, at the Command  
Of *Juno*, crowns their Sorrows with Applause, 685  
And interests the People in their Cause.

Their Hands with Boughs, their Foreheads she supplies  
With Wreaths, and teaches them in humble Guise  
To veil their Face, the suppliant Knee to bend,  
And empty Urns to public View extend. 690

Of ev'ry Age a Crowd of Gazers roams,  
Some seek the Streets, and others mount their Domes:  
From whence this Swarm of wretched Dames (they  
cry)

Why flows the Tear, and heaves the broken Sigh?  
In Concert, ere they learn the Cause, they groan. 695  
The Goddess, mixt with either Train, makes known  
The Object of their Suit, their native Land,  
And whom they mourn, and answers each Demand.

On all Occasions they themselves disclose  
The Source and Origin of all their Woes, 700  
And, murm'ring out th' inhuman Tyrant's Law,  
In Throngs around a vulgar Audience draw.

Thus from their Nests the *Thracian* Birds complain  
In broken Notes, and many a twitt'ring Strain,

v. 703. *Thus from their Nests*] *Tereus*, King of *Thrace*, having married *Progne*, the Daughter of *Pandion* King of *Athens*, and ravished her Sister *Philemela*, cut out her Tongue, and shut her up in a Prison, where she wrote the Story in Needle-Work, and sent it to her Sister. *Progne* was transform'd to a Swallow, and *Philemela* to a Nightingale. — We had a Simile drawn from this Bird in the 8th Book. I do not like the Repetition; but think it much more tolerable than one in the fifteenth Book of the *Iliad*, which is copied verbatim from one in the sixth: I mean that of a Horse set

598 STATIUS'S THEBAID. Book XII.

To Strangers when th' incestuous Rape they sing, 705  
And wail th' Injustice of the lustful King.

There stood as in the Centre of the Town

An Altar, sacred to the Poor alone;

Here gentle Clemency has fix'd her Seat:

And none but Wretches hallow the Retreat. 710

A Train of Votaries she never wants:

And all Requests and Suits, impartial, grants.

Whoe'er implore, a speedy Audience gain;

And open Night and Day her Gates remain:

That Misery might ever find Access 715

And by Complaints alone obtain Redress.

Nor costly are her Rites: no Blood she claims

From slaughter'd Victims, nor odorous Flames;

Her Altars sweat with Tears; and Wreaths of Woe,

Her Suitors, tearing from their Hair, bestow, 720

Or Garments in her Fane are left behind,

When Fortune shifts the Scene, to her resign'd.

A Grove surrounds it, where in shadowy Rows

The Laurel Tree and suppliant Olive grows.

No well-wrought Effigy her Likeness bears, 725

Her imag'd Form no sculptur'd Metal wears:

set at Liberty and ranging the Pastures: whereas our Author has varied his Language and the Circumstances of the Comparison.

v. 709. *Here gentle Clemency*] *Chaucer*, who in his *Palamon and Arcite* has taken great Liberties with our Author, and almost transcribed some Passages (as will be seen in the Sequel) mentions the *Argive* Ladies entering this Temple.

Here in this Temple of the Goddesse Clemence,  
We have been waiting all this fourteenight: &c.

There is a vast Luxuriance of Fancy, as well as Propriety display'd in this Description. The Building, Sacrifices, and Votaries are such as are highly consistent with the Nature of the thing, and Character of this Goddess.

In human Breasts resides the Pow'r divine,  
 A constant Lavee trembling at her Shrine.  
 The Place, deform'd with Horrors not its own,  
 To none but Objects of Distress is known. 730  
 Fame says, the Sons of great *Alcides* rear'd  
 The Fane, in Honour of the Pow'r rever'd  
 (A Temple to their Father first decreed)  
 But Fame diminishes the glorious Deed.  
 'Tis juster to believe, the Pow'rs above, 735  
 Of whose Protection, and parental Love  
 Fair *Athens* shar'd a more than equal Part,  
 The Pile erected, not a Mortal's Art;  
 That Mercy might, by rushing in between  
 Offended Justice, and th' Offender screen 740  
 The guilty Wretch: — for this the Structure rose,  
 A common Refuge in the greatest Woes.  
 No human Blood th' unspotted Pavement stains;  
 But threat'ning Vengeance with her clanking Chains,  
 And Instruments of Anger, howls aloof, 745  
 Nor Fortune frowns beneath this hallow'd Roof.  
 Through all the Globe is this Asylum known.  
 Here Kings depos'd, and Chiefs in War o'erthrown,  
 And those, whose Error was their only Crime,  
 Convene, repairing from each distant Clime. 750  
 This hospitable Goddess soon o'ercame  
 The Rage of *Oedipus*, whose vengeful Flame

v. 752. *The Rage of Oedipus*] *Oedipus*, being expell'd *Thebes*, by the Command of *Creon*, fled to *Colonus*, where there was a Temple consecrated to the Furies, but was taken thence by the *Athenians*, and very hospitably entertained. *Aristophanes* wrote a Tragedy on this Subject. *Lactantius*.

The Furies kindled; and *Orestes* freed  
 From the fell Horrors of the murd'rous Deed.  
 Hither the pensive Dames of *Lerna* come, 755  
 Conducted by a Crowd: before the Dome  
 A Train of Pilgrims stood, but all give Way.  
 Soon as more pleasing Thoughts their Cares allay,  
 They shout aloud. — Thus when a well-rang'd Host  
 Of feather'd Cranes survey the *Pbarian* Coast, 760  
 They stretch their Necks, and clapping, as they fly,  
 Their Wings expanded, shade a Length of Sky:  
 Such is their Joy to scape the Winter's Reign,  
 And share in *Nile* the Summer-Heats again.  
 Now *Thejeus*, grac'd with Conquest and Renown 765  
 From *Scythian* Battels, seeks th' *Athenian* Town.  
 A Pair of snow-white Steeds his Chariot draws,  
 His Chariot wreath'd with Laurels, while th' Applause  
 Of shouting Thousands, and pacific Sound  
 Of breathing Clarions wafts his Praise around 770  
 To swell the Pomp, before the Chief are borne  
 The Spoils and Trophies from the vanquish'd torn;  
 The Car, the Pageant charg'd with many a Crest,  
 The sorrowing Steed, with Trappings gayly drest,  
 The Pole-Axe, wont to lay the Forest low, 775  
 And thin *Mæotis*, the well-polish'd Bow,  
 The Quiver light, the Girdle studded o'er  
 With Gems, and Shield deform'd with female Gore.  
 But they, intrepid still, their Sex disclose,  
 And in no vulgar Groans express their Woes; 780

v. 759. *A well-rang'd Host*] The Cranes in their Flight (as here from a colder to a warmer Climate) usually kept in the Form of one of these three Greek Letters Δ Δ or Υ, unless the Violence of the Wind, or any other Accident broke their Order.



Book XII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 601

To sue for Life unworthily disdain,  
 And seek the martial Virgin's holy Fane.  
 The reigning Passion now is to behold  
 The Victors, glitt'ring with *Barbaric* Gold;  
 But most *Hippolyte* their Notice drew, 785  
 No longer frowning, but serene to view,  
 And reconcil'd to Nuptial-Rites. — they gaze  
 Askance, with Looks expressive of Amaze,  
 And mutter out their Wonder, that she broke  
 Her Country's Laws, and patient of the Yoke, 790  
 With artful Braidings trick'd her auburn Hair,  
 And veil'd her Sun-burnt Bosom, whilom bare;  
 That, pleas'd, she mixes in the gaudy Show,  
 And brooks th' Embraces of an *Attic* Foe.  
 By slow Degrees the Suppliants quit the Fane, 795  
 And, standing full in Prospect of the Train,

v. 785. Hippolyte] *Bernartius* gives Himself much trouble about the Name of this Lady of *Thebes*, and endeavours to prove from a Passage in *Pausanias*, that it was not *Hippolyte*, but *Antiope*. But as what he advances is very dry and tedious, and as the Subject itself is not interesting (a Poet not being tied down to historical Precision) I shall take no farther Notice of it, as the Reader may see it at large in the Variorum Edition by *Veenbusen*.

v. 795. By slow Degrees] So *Chaucer*.

This Duke, of whom I make mencioune,  
 When he was come almost to the Town  
 In all his well and his most Pride,  
 He was ware, as he cast his Eye aside,  
 Where that there kneled in the high Wey  
 A Companis of Ladies, twey and twey :  
 Each after other clad in Clothes blacke,  
 But such a crie and such a Woe they make,  
 That in this World nys Creature living  
 That ever heard such a waimenting :  
 And of this Crie they would never stenten,  
 Till they the Reines of his bridell henten.

Admire the Triumph, and recall to Mind,  
 Their Husbands, to the Fowls of Air resign'd.  
 The Coursers halting, from his Chariot's Height  
 The Monarch lean'd, and, musing at the Sight, 800  
 Inquires the Cause. — To his Demand replied  
 The Wife of *Capaneus*, and boldly cried.  
 O valiant *Theſeus*, of whose future Praise,  
 And Glory, Fortune on our Ruins lays

v. 803. O valiant Theſeus] It will not I apprehend, be an un-  
 pleasing Task to the Reader to compare this Speech with the last  
 quoted Author's on the same Subject.

The oldeſt Ladie of them all ſpake,  
 Whan ſhe had ſoigned with a deadlie chere,  
 That it was ruth for to ſee and here :  
 She ſaid, Lord to whom Fortune hath yene  
 Victory, and a Conqueror to live ;  
 Nought greveth us your Glory and Honour,  
 But we beſpeke you of Mercy and Socour.  
 And have Mercy on our Wo and Diſtreſſe,  
 Some drop of Pity through the Gentilneſſe  
 Upon us wretched Wymen let thou fall.  
 For certes, Lord, there nys none of us all  
 That ſhene hath been a Dutcheſſe or a Quene,  
 Nor be we Caytifs, as it is well iſene :  
 Thanked be Fortune, and her falſe Whele  
 That none Eſtate aſſureth for to be well.  
 Now certes, Lord, to abyde your Preſence,  
 Here in this Temple of the Goddeſſe Clemence,  
 We have be waiting all this fourteenight :  
 Helpe us, Lord, ſith it lieth in thy Might.  
 I Wretch, that wepe and waile thus  
 Whilom Wiſe to King *Capaneus*,  
 That ſtarfe at *Thebes*, curſed be the Day,  
 And all we that ben in this Array,  
 And maken all this Lamentation  
 We loſten all our Huſbondes at that Town,  
 While that the Siege thereabout laie ;  
 And yet the old *Creon* (wel awaie)  
 That Lord is now of *Thebes* Cite,

## BOOK XII. STATIUS: THEBAID. 603

The Basis, deem us not a guilty Train 805  
 For Crimes far exil'd, or of foreign Strain :  
 Since all of us attain'd the Rank before  
 Of royalty, and rul'd th' *Inacbian* Shore,  
 The Wives of Kings, who met an early Grave  
 In *Theban Wars*, unfortunately brave. 810  
 Tho' griev'd, we cannot of their Deaths complain,  
 For this the Laws and Chance of Arms ordain.  
 Nor were they Centaurs, or of monstrous Birth,  
 The Sport of Nature, and the Dregs of Earth.  
 To wave their Race, and glorious Ancestry, 815  
 Suffice it, noble *Theseus*, that with thee  
 They bore a manly Form, a thinking Mind,  
 And all the Properties of human Kind : •  
 Yet *Croon*, ruthless as the King of Hell,  
 And, as th' infernal Boatman, stern and fell, 820  
 To breathless Carcasses extends his Ire,  
 Nor grants the last sad Honours of the Pyre :  
 Beneath the doubtful Axle of the Sky,  
 And *Erebus*, unburied still they lie.  
 Alas ! O Nature, how art thou debas'd ! 825  
 Through our Defaults insulted and disgrac'd.

Fulfilled of Yre, and of Inquite,  
 He for Dispute, and for his Tyranny  
 To done the Deed Bodies Villanie,  
 Of all our Lords, which that benflawe  
 Hath all the Bodies on an Heape idrawe ;  
 And will not suffer them by none Assent  
 Neither to be buried, ne to be brent  
 But maketh Hounds to eat hem in Dispite.  
 And wi h that Word without more Respice  
 They fallen grosly, and crien piteously,  
 Have on us wretched Wyemen some Mercie  
 And let our Sorowe sinke in thine Hert.

Where now is *Athens*? where the Gods above?  
 Why sleeps the Thunder-bolt of partial Jove.  
 Meanwhile the sev'nth bright Harbinger of Day  
 Turns far from *Thebes* her orient Steeds away. 830  
 The Stars, that gild yon spangled Sphere with Light,  
 Avert their Rays, and sicken at the Sight.  
 The very Birds, and Monsters of the Wood  
 Abhor th' ill-scented Field, and noisome Food,  
 From the corrupted Blood such Streams arise, 835  
 Taint the fresh Gale, and poison half the Skies.  
 Nought save the putrid Gore to burn remains,  
 And naked Bones, that whiten all the Plains.  
 Haste, venerable Sons of *Cecrops*, haste  
 To lay the Realms of haughty *Creon* waste: 840  
 Such Vengeance well becomes you haste before  
 He pours his Fury on the *Thracian* Shore,  
 Before each Nation shares an equal Fate,  
 And Millions rot beneath his impious Hate.  
 For say, what Lengths will bound his lawless Rage,  
 If Thoughts of Vengeance yet his Breast engage?  
 'Tis true, they fought, and vanquish'd press'd the  
 Plains,  
 Yet why should he pursue their cold Remains?  
 Not thus thy Wrath, as Fame reports the Deed,  
 Base *Sinis* to his Brother Brutes decreed; 850

v. 850. *Base Sinis*] *Sinis*, *Cercyon* and *Scyron* were notorious Robbers, whom this Hero killed, of the former *Pausania* in his *Corinthiacs* gives the following Account. "In the *Isthmus* there is  
 "a Place, where *Sinis*, the Robber, bending the Branches of several Pines to the Ground, bound the Wretches that he over-  
 "came, to them in such a Manner, that when the Trees unbent  
 "themselves, they tore their Bodies to Pieces. He was punished  
 "in the same Way by *Thebes*."

BOOK XII. STATIUS, THEBAID. 605

But, as thy valour great, thy Pity gave  
 Him and his ill-deserving Peers, a Grave.  
 Thy Piety, I ween, the Foe admires,  
 And *Tanais* shines bright with frequent Fires.  
 No wonder then, the Pow'rs of Battel bless 855  
 Thy dreaded Arms with more than hop'd Success,  
 Yet Oh what Wreaths thy Forehead should adorn,  
 More glorious, than the Palm of Conquest borne.  
 Woud'st thou but grace the Dead with Obsequies,  
 And ease the Realms of *Dis*, the Earth, and Skies. 860  
 If *Crete*, and thy own *Marathonian* Plain  
 Thou freed'st, nor the sage Matron wept in vain,  
 O grant our Suit: so thro' th' ensanguin'd Field  
 May *Pallas* guide thee, and from Danger shield;  
 Nor *Hercules* with envious Hate pursue 865  
 Thy equal Feats: but may thy Mother view  
 An endless Round of Triumphs, nor the State  
 Of *Athens* prove at any Time our Fate:  
 She said and ceas'd. with Hands upheld the rest  
 Eccho her Shrieks, and second her Request. 870

*Propertius* alludes to this Fact. Book 3d.

Arboreaſque cruces Sinis et non hospita Graüs  
 Saxa, et curvatas in ſua fata trabes.

See *Plutarch* likewise in the Life of *Thiſeus*. *Bernartius*.

v. 854. *And Tanais*] *Tanais* was a famous River in the Country of the *Amazons*.

v. 861. *If Crete, and &c.*] He killed the *Marathonian* Bull, and Minotaure of *Crete*.

v. 869. *She ſaid and ceas'd*] Let us ſee what *Chaucer* ſays.

This gentil Duke downe from his Horſe ſtert,  
 With Hert piteous, when he herd hem ſpeke.  
 Him thought that his Hert woulde breke.  
 Whan he ſaw hem ſo piteous and ſo mate  
 That whilom were of ſo grete Eſtate:

At this the Stream of Grief begins to flow,  
 And his wet Cheeks with rising Blushes glow.  
 But soon his Tears are dried in vengeful Flames;  
 And, fir'd with just Resentment, he exclaims.  
 What Fury thus deforms the moral Plain 675  
 Of Kings, and in the Monster sinks the Man?  
 Thank Heav'n, my Virtue is not left behind,  
 Nor with my Climate have I chang'd my Mind.  
 Whence this new Phrenzy, *Creon*? hast thou thought  
 My Spirits broken with the Toils I wrought? 880  
 I come, I come, unwearied as before:  
 And my Spear thirsts for thy devoted Gore.  
 Then quick, my faithful *Phœgeus*, turn thy Steed,  
 And bear to *Creon* this my Will decreed,  
 "Thebes, or the Grecian Carcasses shall burn:" 885  
 Go, and prevent our Hopes with thy Return.  
 This said, forgetful of his recent Toils,  
 He cheers his Troops to fight with promis'd Spoils  
 And heals their Strength impair'd.—Thus when again  
 The Victor-Bull recovers his Domain, 890

And in his Armes he hern all up hent,  
 And hem comforted in full good Battail:  
 And swore his Othe, as he was true Knight  
 He wolde don so ferforthly his Might  
 Upon the Tyrant *Creon* hem to wreake,  
 That all the People of *Greece* shalde speake  
 How *Creon* was of *Thebes* yferved;  
 As he that hath his Deth full well deserved.

v. 889. *Thus when again*] There is a great Deal of what the  
*French* call *Naiueté vivace* in this Comparifon, and it may be ob-  
 served to the Honour of our Author, that he never fails in this  
 Article through the the whole Work.

————— servatur ad imum,  
 Qualis ab incepto processerat, et sibi constat.

And Herd, if haply the rebellowing Grove  
 Betrays a second Rival to his Love,  
 Tho' from his Head and Neck, the bloody Show'rs  
 Distill, he recollects his scatter'd Pow'rs,  
 And, ev'ry Groan suppress'd, and Wound conceal'd,  
 Expatiates o'er the Mead, untaught to yield. 896  
*Tritonia* shakes the Terrors of her Breast;  
 And strait the Snakes, that form *Medusa's* Crest,  
 With hostile Hissings all at once arise,  
 And at the Walls of *Cadmus* dart their Eyes. 900  
 Nor had th' *Athenian* Host prepar'd to go,  
 When *Dirce* trembled at the Trump of Woe.  
 Now to the War not only those, who shar'd  
 The Laurels reap'd on *Caucasus*, repair'd  
 With unextinguish'd Heat, but ev'ry Plain 905  
 To Combate sends a rude, unmarshall'd Train  
 Beneath the Standards of their Chief convene  
 The Hinds, who cultivate the Pastures green  
 Of *Brauron*, and the *Pyrean* Strand,  
 Dreadful tho' firm to Seamen, when they land. 910  
 From *Marathon*, inur'd to martial Toils,  
 Though yet unnotic'd for its *Persian* Spoils,  
 A Band arrives. with these a Cohort speeds  
 From fair *Melene's* ever-verdant Meads.  
 Then from *Icarius'* hospitable Dome, 915  
 To Gods a Feasting-House, the Warriors roam,  
 From *Parnes*, with a purple Harvest crown'd  
*Egaleos*, for its fertile Groves renown'd,

v. 912. *Though yet unnotic'd*] The *Athenians* gained a great Victory here over the *Persian* Army commanded by *Xerxes*, whose History every one is well acquainted with.

And *Lycabessos*, not unknown to Fame  
 For Olives. — Next the stern *Ileus* came, 920  
 The rough *Hymettian*, and the Swains who wreath  
 The *Thyrus* in *Acbarne's* Vales beneath.  
*Sunium*, by eastern Prows afar perceiv'd,  
 Is left, from whence the *Cretan* Ship deceiv'd  
 The Sire with sable Sails, as o'er the Steep 925  
 He bent, in Act to fall, and name the Deep.  
 These *Salamis*, and those *Eleusis* sends,  
 O'er whose rich Furrows *Ceres* wide extends  
 The Scene of Plenty : on they bend their Way,  
 Their Plows suspended for the dreadful Fray. 930  
 Now march the Troops, whom, hardy, fierce and bold,  
*Calliroe's* nine meandring Streams infold,  
 And fair *Ilyssos*, who conceal'd with Care  
 The *Thracian* Ravisher, and *Attic* Fair.  
 The Citadel resigns its Guards for Fight, 935  
 Where *Neptune* and *Minerva* vy'd in Might,

v. 925. *With sable Sails*] The Lot falling upon *Theseus* to go to *Crete* according to the Compact with *Minos*, he went on board a Ship, whose Sails and Tackle were black, and receiv'd this Command from his Father *Ageus*, that if he escaped the Dangers, he should change his black Sails into white ones : but the Hero forgetting this Injunction, his Father seeing the black Sails imagin'd that his Son was dead, and cast himself headlong from the Promontory of *Sunium* into the Sea, which was afterwards call'd the *Aegean* from his Name and Destiny.

v. 933. *Who conceal'd with Care*] *Boreas* ravished *Orythia*, the Daughter of King *Eretheus*, by whom he had the two Twins, *Zetus* and *Calais*. *Laßantius*.

v. 940. *Where Neptune and Minerva*] The Poet means the Acropolis, where the above-mentioned Deities made a Tryal of their Power. The former, by striking the Earth, caus'd a Horse to spring from it, which is the Token of War : but the latter produc'd an Olive-Tree, the Ensign of Peace.



Till from the doubtful Cliff an Olive sprung,  
 And th' ebbing Seas with length'ning Shade o'erhung.  
 Nor had the *Strybian* Queen withheld her Aid;  
 She join'd the Host with Ensigns high-display'd. 940  
 But *Theseus*, mindful of her growing Pains,  
 And swelling Womb, her youthful Heat restrains,  
 And warns her, safe at home from War's Alarms,  
 To deck the Nuptial-Bed with votive Arms.  
 Soon as the Chief surveys their martial Rage, 945  
 While prone to fight, and ardent to engage,  
 They greet their Offspring with a short Embrace,  
 Thus from his Car he speaks. — O gen'rous Race!  
 With me selected to defend the Laws  
 Of Nations, and assert the common Cause, 950  
 Exert your Pow'rs, and to the Combate rise  
 With Courage equal to the vast Emprize.  
 With us is Nature, ever faithful Guide,  
 The Gods, inclining to the juster Side,  
 And, to our View disclos'd, th' *Elysian* Band 955  
 In Approbation of our Conduct stand:  
 The Snake-hair'd Fiends the Sons of *Cadmus* head  
 And to the Wind their floating Banners spread.

v. 944. *To deck*] It was a Custom of the Ancients after a Victory, or when they had resign'd their military Employments, to hang up their Arms, and consecrate them. — *Horace* alludes to this Ceremony. Lib. 3. Ode 26.

Vixi puellis nuper idoneus,  
 Et militavi non sine Gloria:  
 Nunc arma, defunctumque bello  
 Barbiton hic paries habebit:  
 Lævum marinæ qui Veneris latus  
 Custodit. hic, hic ponite lucida  
 Funalia, et vestes, et arcus  
 Oppositis foribus minaces.

On then, my Friends, to conquer or to die,  
 And on the Justice of your Cause rely. 960  
 The Monarch spoke, and hurl'd a sounding Lance,  
 Prelude to fight, and signal to advance.  
 As when the cloudy Son of *Saturn* forms  
 The Winter's Reign, and vexes with his Storms  
 The northern Pole, the Face of Heav'n's o'ercast, 965  
 And all *Aeolia* shakes beneath the Blast,  
 Whilst *Boreas*, scorning his inactive Ease,  
 Acquires fresh Strength, and whistles o'er the Seas:  
 Then groan the Waves and Hills, the Lightnings  
 shine,  
 The Thunders roar, the Clouds in Conflict join. 970  
 Thus with repeated Strokes the Plains resound,  
 And Wheels and Hoofs indent the smoking Ground.  
 Troop follows Troop: beneath their Feet arise  
 Black Clouds of Dust, and intercept the Skies,  
 Yet thro' the thick'ning Gloom by Fits is seen 975  
 The transient Light of Arms, that gleams between.  
 Their Javelins glare with intermingled Rays,  
 And strike each other with reflected Blaze.  
 Now thro' the Shades of Night they seek their Foes:  
 Meanwhile a Contest emulous arose, 980  
 Who first could reach the Town, and in the Wall  
 Infix his Dart. Conspicuous o'er them all,

v 961. *And hurl'd a sounding Lance*] The Poet has here (as it sometimes happens with the most accurate Writers) confounded the Customs of other Countries with those of his own, in representing *Theseus* giving the Signal of War by darting a Javelin into the Frontiers of his Enemy's Country, which Ceremony was peculiar to the *Romans* only, and perform'd by their *Feciales* or *Heralds at Arms*, as we learn from *Livy*, Book 1.

# BOOK XII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 611

*Neptune's* great Offspring stalks along the Field  
 With haughty Strides, and waves his ample Shield,  
 The sculptr'd Surface of whose Bos displays 985  
*Crete's* hundred Towns, the first Essay of Praise.  
 Himself is there pourtray'd, as rashly brave  
 Within the horrid Windings of the Cave,  
 He twists the Monster's Neck, and to his Hands,  
 And brawny Arms applies the strait'ning Bands, 990  
 Or from his threat'ning Horns withdraws away  
 His Face, and shuns with Art th' unequal Fray.  
 Fear seiz'd the *Theban* Host, as they survey'd  
 The Warrior's Image on the Targe pourtray'd;  
 Such was th' Engraver's Skill, they seem'd to view 995  
 A double *Theseus*, wet with gory Dew.  
 The Hero at the Sight recalls to Mind  
 His ancient Deeds, his Friends of noble Kind,  
 The late-fear'd Threshold, and the Gnosian Fair,  
 Pursuing the lost Clue with busy Care. 1000

v. 989. *The Monster's Neck*] The Minotaur was half Man, half Beast, and kept in the Labyrinth made by *Dædalus*, where he devoured yearly seven of the noblest *Athenian* Youths, till the third Year *Theseus* slew him, and escaped by the Help of *Ariadne*.

v. 995. *They seem'd to view*] *Tasso* seems to have imitated this Fiction in the last Canto of his *Jerusalem* delivered, where he tells us, that *Rinaldo's* Motions were so sudden and rapid, that every time he brandished his Sword, his Enemies thought he brandished three.

Qual tre lingue vibrar sembra il Serpente,  
 Che la prestezza d'una il persuade;  
 Tal credea lui la sfigottita gente  
 Con la rapida man girar tre spade  
 L'occhio al moto deluso il falso crede.  
 E' l terrore a que' mostri accresce fede.

Meantime the Dames, for speedy Death design'd  
 By *Creon's* Law, their Hands fast-bound behind,  
 Are from the loathsome Prison-house convey'd  
 Beneath a double Guard. Both undismay'd,  
 Triumphant would resign their vital Breath, 1005  
 Smile at the Dagger drawn, and rush on Death,  
 And dying disappoint the Tyrant's Aim;  
 When to the Court th' *Atbenian* Legate came.  
 An Olive's peaceful Branch indeed he bears  
 But War in high insulting Tone declares; 1010  
 And mindful of his Lord's supreme Command,  
 Informs the *Theban* King, that near at hand,  
 His Master's Troops are station'd, and but wait  
 His Answer, to commence the stern Debate.  
 The Tyrant, floating in a Sea of Care, 1015  
 Now doubts to persevere in Wrath, or spare,  
 At length with an assum'd, embitter'd Smile  
 Confirm'd he thus replies in haughty Style.  
 Since then no Samples of our Ire suffice  
 To make a rash, and doating People wise, 1020  
 Let Self-Experience. — See! the Foe again  
 Insults our Walls. We'll meet them on the Plain.  
 Let them prepare to share their Neighbour's Fate;  
 Repent they may, but they repent too late.  
 This is our Law, and on these Terms we take. 1025  
 The Field. — While thus in angry Mood he spake,

v. 1001. *Meantime the Dames*] There is a great Similitude between this Book and the 2d of *Tasso's Jerusalem*. The Magnanimity of *Olindo* and *Sopronia* resembles that of *Antigone* and *Argia*. The former are delivered from Punishment by the Mediation of *Clorinda*, and the latter by the Interposition of the *Atbenian* Ambassador. Nor is the haughty Deportment of *Phoenix* unlike that of *Argene*.

A Cloud of Dust, ascending in his Sight.  
 Obscures the Day, and hides the Mountains Height.  
 Impassion'd as he was, he warns his Bands  
 To arm, and Armour for himself demands. 1030  
 Sudden he sees (an Omen of his Fall)  
 The Furies seated in the middle Hall,  
*Menæceus* weeping his devoted Sire,  
 And the glad *Argives* flaming on the Pyre.  
 How fatal to the *Thebans* was the Day, 1035  
 When Peace, by Blood obtain'd, was chac'd away?  
 Their Weapons, scarce hung up, they now resume,  
 Hack'd Shields, unable to prevent their Doom,  
 Helms of their Crests bereft in Days of Yore,  
 And Javelins yet distain'd with clotted Gore: 1040  
 None is distinguish'd on th' embattel'd Mead  
 For his neat Quiver, Sword, and well-rein'd Steed.  
 No longer in the Trenches they confide:  
 The City-Walls gape wide on every Side,  
 No Gates, nor Bulwarks guard the Guilty Town, 1045  
 By *Capaneus* dismantled, and o'erthrown.  
 Nor now the heartless Youth, before they quit  
 Their Wives and Children, in Embraces knit

v. 1027. *A Cloud of Dust, ascending in his Sight*] Occasioned by the March of the *Athenian* Army.

v. 1031. *And sudden sees*] To make this Fiction tolerable, we must not take the Words of the Original in a literal Sense, but suppose, that *Creon*, oppress'd with Cares and Anxiety, fell asleep, and saw these Images in a Dream; as *Richard* the third in *Shakespeare* the Night before the Battel of *Bosworth* saw the Ghosts of those he had murdered, and was by them threatened with his approaching Death.

1047. *Before they quit*] The farewell Kiss was so much insisted on by the Ancients at parting from, or seeing one another again after a long Absence, that *Suetonius* informs us, *Nero* was censur'd, and look'd upon as an uncourteous brute for the Omission of it.  
 'Quod

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Their spreading Arms, nor the last Kifs bestow ;  
 E'en the craz'd Parents part without a Vow, 1050  
 But when th' *Athenian* saw the solar Beam  
 From bursting Clouds upon his Armour gleam,  
 With headlong Fury on the Field he leaps,  
 Where many an *Argive* Chief unburied sleeps :  
 And, as he views the Blood-polluted Streams, 1055  
 And breaths an Air condens'd by vap'ry Steams  
 Beneath his dusty Helmet, at the Sight  
 Enflam'd, he groans, and rushes to the Fight.  
 Some Reverence at least the *Theban* shows,  
 Some Honour on the *Grecians* he bestows, 1060  
 As for the Fight another Plain he chose,  
 Nor mingled with the Dead his living Foes.  
 But, to fill up the Measure of his Guilt,  
 And save the Blood, devoted to be spilt,  
 A Field untill'd, and never furrow'd o'er 1065  
 He singles out, to drink the hostile Gore.  
 And now *Bellona* sets in adverse Arms  
 Both Hosts, and shakes the Plain with War's Alarms.  
 With Shouts the *Theban* Bands the Strife commence :  
 But martial Trumps th' *Athenian* Troops incense. 1070  
 With down-cast Looks the Sons of *Cadmus* stand,  
 And feebly grasp the Weapons in their Hand ;  
 Their Arms yet unemploy'd, they yield their Ground,  
 And shew old Scars, and many a streaming Wound.

' Quod neque adveniens, neque proficiscens, quenquam oculo im-  
 ' pertivit.' Life of *Nero*, Cap 37.

v 1070. But martial Trumps] *Euripides* tells us, that *Theſeus* be-  
 fore the Battel declar'd to either Army by an Herald, that he had  
 no other View in this Expedition, but to have Justice done to the  
*Argives*, by having them buried in a decent proper Manner; and  
 that *Creon* made no Answer to this Declaration. *Barbini*.

Nor in th' *Athenian* Chieftains as before 1075  
 The Thirst of Vengeance glows; their Threats are o'er,  
 And, unoppos'd, their Courage dies away.  
 Thus, when the yielding Woods decline the Fray,  
 The Winds grow placid; and the Waves subside,  
 If no firm Shore repels the briny Tide. 1080  
 But as the Son of *Ægeus* high display'd  
 The Spear of *Marathonian* Oak, whose Shade  
 O'erhangs the Foe, whilst dreadful to the Sight,  
 Its steely Point emits a beamy Light.  
 His Foes pale Horror urges from behind, 1085  
 And wings them with the Fleetness of the Wind.  
 As when from *Hæmus* Mars impells his Car,  
 And scatters Havock from the Wheels of War,

v. 1087. *As when from Hæmus*] Statius by this Comparison sets the Valour of *Theseus* in a very exalted Light. He is no less formidable than *Mars* himself. We look upon him, as more than human, and are not astonished so much at the Effects of his Prowess. The first Hint of comparing Heroes to the Gods was *Homer's*, who in his *Iliad* likens *Idomeneus* to this same Deity.

Lib. 13. Versè 298.

Οἷος ὃ βροτολογὸς ἄρ' ἔστι πάλεμ' ὀδὸν μίττεισι,  
 Τῷ δ' ὅτε φίλον φίλον ἔσθ' ἄρ' ἔστι κρατερὸς καὶ ἀντιπρὸς  
 ἑαυτοῦ, δὲ ἐφ' ὅσον πολέμοιο πρὸς πολέμοιο.

*Virgil* has enlarg'd on this Simile, and thrown in several beautiful Images. *Æneid*, Book the 12. V. 331.

Qualis apud gelidi cum flumina concitus Hebri  
 Sanguineus Mavors clypeo increpat, atque furentes  
 Bella movens immittit Equos: illi æquore aperto  
 Ante Notos Zephyrumque volant: gemit ultima pulsa  
 Thraca pedum: circumque atræ Formidinis ora,  
 Iræque, Infidiæque, Dei comitatus, aguntur.

*Silius Italicus* has likewise imitated it in his *Punic War*, Book 1.

Quantus Bistonis latè Gradivus in oris  
 Belligero rapitur curru, telumque coruscans  
 Titæum quo pulsa cohors, flagrantia bella  
 Cornipedum afflatu domat, et stridoribus axis

Before him Carnage, Rout, Disorder fly,  
 His Harbingers, and all or kill or die. 1090  
 But *Theseus* scorns to stain with vulgar Gore  
 His Sword. The flying Herd he passes o'er,  
 To weaker Hands such easy Conquests yields,  
 And scours, in quest of nobler Game, the Fields.  
 Thus Dogs and Wolves invade the ready Prey, 1095  
 While the more gen'rous Lion stalks away.  
 Yet *Thamirus* and bold *Olenius* too,  
 Presuming to contend in Arms, he slew;  
 This, as he lifts a Stone, in Act to throw,  
 That, as he fits his Arrow to his Bow. 1100  
 Then fell three Sons of *Alceus* side by Side,  
 Whilst in their Strength united they confide.  
 Pierc'd by three Spears: first, wounded in his Breast,  
 Rash *Phileus* sought the Shades of endless Rest,  
 Next, the Lance piercing thro' the Shoulder-Joint,  
*Japix* dies, last *Helops* bit the Point. 1106  
 Now *Hamon* in his Car he fought: his Blade,  
 Wav'd round, in Air a dazzling Circle made:  
 But he retires. — The Spear with whizzing Sound  
 Two Chiefs transfix'd with one continu'd Wound,  
 And aim'd a third, but th' Axle-tree withstood, 1112  
 And lodg'd the Dart, deep-buried in the Wood.  
 But *Creon* only thro' the Ranks of Fight  
 He seeks, and challenges to prove his Might:  
 The Tyrant in the Van, tho' far apart, 1115  
 He soon espies, whilst using ev'ry Art,  
 To dare th' Attack he reincites his Band,  
 And makes the last Effort: him, by Command

γ. 1118. *Him by Command*] Our Author seems to have taken this  
 Circumstance from *Virgil's Æneid*, Lib. 12. Verse 758.



## BOOK XII. STATIUS'S THEBAID. 617

Of *Theseus*, his retiring Troops resign  
 To his own Valour, and the Pow'r's divine. 1120  
 The King recalls them, but, when he descry'd  
 Himself alike abhorr'd by either Side,  
 Bold with Despair, his utmost Rage collects,  
 And thus to *Theseus* his Discourse directs.  
 Think not, thou comest here a War to wage 1125  
 With *Amazons*, or wreak thy female Rage  
 On female Foes. — Thou meet'st with manly Arms,  
 Chiefs old in War, and nurs'd amidst Alarms;  
 Beneath whose Might *Hippomedon* was slain,  
 And *Capaneus*, and *Tydeus* press'd the Plain. 1130  
 What Phrenzy prompts thee thus to tempt thy Fate?  
 See, in whose Cause thou kindlest the Debate!  
 He spoke, and at the Foe a Javelin flings,  
 Faint on the Surface of the Shield it rings.  
 But *Theseus*, smiling at the feeble Blow 1135  
 Shakes his enormous Lance, in Act to throw,  
 But, ere he lets th' impatient Weapon fly,  
 In thund'ring Accents makes this stern Reply.

Ille simul fugiens, Rutulos simul increpat omnes,  
 Nomine quemque vocans; notumque efflagitat enssem.  
 Æneas mortem contra præsensque minatur  
 Exitium, si quisquam adeat; terretque tremantes  
 Excisurum urbem minitans: —————

v. 1125. *Think not,*] *Numanus* in the 9th Book of the *Æneid*  
 insults the *Trojans* in almost the same Strain.

Quis Deus Italiam, quæ vos dementia adegit?  
 Non hic Atridæ: nec sancti sistor Ulysses:

*Caesar* however, in the Heat of his Passion, transgresses the Bounds  
 of Truth, and very ungratefully forgets his Deliverer, in attri-  
 buting the Death of *Capaneus* to a mortal Hand.

Ye Grecian Shades, to whom *Aegides* sends :  
 This Sacrifice, prepare the vengeful Fiends 1140  
 For his Reception, and unbar the Domes  
 Of *Tartarus*: He comes, the Tyrant comes.  
 He said, with Force dismiss'd, the quiv'ring Dart  
 Pervades the Skies, and lights, where near his Heart  
 The slender Chains, well-wrought of ductile Gold,  
 The Cuirass, arm'd with many a Plate infold. 1146  
 The Blood spins upward from a thousand Holes:  
 He sinks, and, doubting where to fix them, rolls  
 His Eyes around. — The Victor stands beside  
 To spoil his Arms, and thus insulting cry'd. 1150  
 Now wilt thou rev'rence Justice, nor disdain  
 To grant Interment to the *Grecians* slain?  
 Go, meet the Vengeance, thy Demerits claim,  
 Secure, howe'er of the last fun'ral Flame.

v. 1151. *Now wilt thou rev'rence Justice*] It may be worth while to compare the Conduct of *Thebes* with that of *Achilles* on a similar Occasion. The former, we see, when *Creon* was just dying, only upbraids him of his Cruelty in a gentle Manner, and with great Humanity promises him, he shall not want the funeral-Rites, which he deny'd to others. Whilst the latter, as it were to sharpen and embitter the Agonies of Death, with the utmost Ferocity threatens *Hector*, that no Motives shall ever prevail with him to suffer his Body to be buried. — Here *Homer* has outrag'd Nature, and not represented his Hero, as a Man, but a Monster. And yet Mr. *Pope*, in the Preface to his Version, after having prais'd his Author's Talent for drawing Characters, and his Lessons of Morality, remarks of *Statius's* Heroes, that an Air of Impetuosity runs through them all; the same horrid and savage Courage appears in his *Capaneus*, *Tydeus* and *Hippomedon*. They have a Parity of Character (says he) which makes them seem Brothers of one Family. — This Observation may suffice to shew the Reader, to what Lengths a Predilection for his Author will carry a Translator.

## BOOK XII. STATIUS's THEBAID. 619

With pious Tumult now both Hosts embrace, 1155  
 Join Hand in Hand, and mingle Face with Face.  
 Peace and a League the Sons of *Thebes* request;  
 And, hailing *Theſeus* by the Name of Guest,  
 Court him to march his Army to the Town,  
 And use the royal Mansion as his own. 1160  
 The Chief assents. The *Theban* Dames rejoice,  
 And greet his Entrance with applauding Voice.  
 Thus did the Banks of *Ganges* once resound  
 The Victor's Praise, with Wreaths of Vine-leaves crown'd.  
 Now from the Summit of the fronting Hill, 1165  
 Whose shady Groves o'erhang the sacred Rill  
 Of *Dirce*, the *Pelasgian* Dames descend,  
 And with shrill Shouts the vaulted *Æther* rend.  
 Thus, when the frantic Choir of Matrons join  
 With hideous Yell the jolly God of Wine 1170  
 They rage and foam, as if they had decreed  
 To do, or late had done some flagrant Deed.  
 Far other Tears gush forth, the Tears of Joy,  
 And various Objects their Pursuit employ.  
 To *Theſeus* these, to *Creon* those repair, 1175  
 Whilst others make the Dead their earliest Care.  
 Scarce could I dignify their Woes in Verse,  
 And all the Pomp in equal Strains rehearse,  
 Should gentle *Phœbus* fortify my Lungs,  
 And give Locution from a hundred Tongues. 1180

v. 1179. *Should gentle Phœbus*] Our Author has imitated this from *Homer*, Book 2d, Verse 488.

Πλάττων δ' ἔκ' αὖτε ἐν τῷ μισθίσματι. ἔδ' ἐνομήναι,  
 Οὐδ' ἂν μοι δέητο μὲν γλώσσαι, δέκα δ' ἔσθ' ἔσθ' αὖτε.  
 Φωνὴ δ' ἄρ' ἔσθ' αὖτε, χαλκίαι δὲ μοι ἔσθ' αὖτε.

Nor is he singular in his Imitation:

To sing, with what a Bound and placid Smile  
*Evadne* leap'd upon the fun'ral Pile,  
 And, folding in her Arms her Husband's Corse,  
 Explor'd the Traces of the Lightning's Force;  
 How his fair Spouse with Kisses stamps the Face 1185  
 Of cruel *Tydeus*, clasp'd in her Embrace;  
 Or to her Sister with fast-streaming Eyes  
*Argia* tells the former Night's Emprize;  
 With what loud Shrieks th' *Arcadian* Queen demands  
 Her Son, bewail'd by all his subject Bands, 1190  
 Her Son, whose Beauty fled not with his Breath;  
 Her Son, esteem'd in Life, and wept in Death.  
 For such a mighty Task the new Supplies  
 Of some inspiring God would scarce suffice.

Non, mihi si linguæ centum sint, oraque centum,  
 Ferrea Vox, omnes scelorum comprehendere formas,  
 Omnia posnarum percurrere nomina possum.

*Virg. Æn. L. 6.*

*Tasso* has also borrow'd the Thought, *Jerusalem* deliver'd it. *Can. 9.*  
 Stan. 92.

Non io; secento bocche, e lingue cento  
 Aveffi, e ferrea Lena, e ferrea voce,  
 Narrar potrei quel numero, che spento  
 Ne' primi affalti hà quel drappel feroce.

1182. *Evadne leap'd upon the fun'ral Pile*] This Heroine threw herself upon the Pile of her Husband *Capaneus*, and was burnt with him. There are equal Instances of Affection amongst the eastern Nations of our Time, and *Montaigne* acquaints us, that it is a Custom in some Parts of *India*, whenever their Prince dies, to burn his most beloved Concubine on the same Pile with him.

v. 1191. *Her Son*] This Repetition of the Hero's Name three times leaves a great Impression of him on the Mind of the Reader, and is so very beautiful, that I thought myself oblig'd to preserve it in the Translation. *Homæ* has one equally delicate.

Νηϊὺς δ' αὖ Σύμῳθι ἄγει τρεῖς νῆας ἱόντας,  
 Νηϊὺς Ἀγλαΐης ἡῶ, χαρίποιό τ' Ἀϊακτος,  
 Νηϊὺς, ὃς κλέϊστος ἀνὴρ ἱππῶν Ἰλίου ἦρχε.

Yet more. — My Ship, long tost upon the Seas, 1195  
Requires a Port, and Interval of Ease.

O *Thebaid*, dear Object of my Toil,  
For twelve long Years pursu'd by Midnight Oil!  
Wilt thou survive thy Author, and be read,  
His Lamp of Life extinct, his Spirit fled? 1200

For thee already Fame has pav'd the Way  
To future Praise, and cherishes thy Lay.

Taste stamps thee current, marks thee for her own,  
And makes thy few Deserts, and Beauties known  
To gen'rous *Cæsar*, whilst the studious Youth 1205

From thy chaste Page imbibes the moral Truth  
With Fiction temper'd. — Claim thy proper Bays,  
Nor emulate the greater *Æneid*'s Praise;

At awful Distance follow, and adore  
Its sacred Footsteps: thus, the Tempest o'er, 1210  
Through Envy's Cloud distinguish'd, thou shalt shine,  
And after me enjoy a Name divine.

1197. O *Thebaid*] The Poet in this Address very artfully takes his Leave of the Reader, and at the same time sings his own Panegyric, which he has done in a decent modest Manner, and paid a genteel Compliment to the Author of the *Æneid*. In this Self-Notice he has the Authority of *Pindar*, *Lucretius*, *Ovid* and *Lucan*, who have all given him Precedents.

F I N I S.

















































37

$$\begin{array}{r} 41 \\ \underline{L} \\ 51- \end{array}$$

